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HISTORY OF THE PUNJAB.

HISTORY OF THE PUNJAB,

AND OF THE

RISE, PROGRESS, & PRESENT CONDITION

OF

THE SECT AND NATION

OF

THE SIKHS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
Wm. H. ALLEN & CO.,
LEADENHALL STREET.

1846.

PREFACE.

WHEN the late Lord William Bentinck, Governor-General of British India, had his celebrated interview with the late Maharaja Runjeet Singh, at Roopur, he was accompanied by Henry Thoby Prinsep, Esq., then Secretary of the Indian Government (since one of the Members of Council), who, in 1834, published, at Calcutta, a volume containing a History of the Political Life of Runjeet Singh, and an account of the origin of the Sikh Power in the Punjab. The circumstances under which this work was prepared were stated by Mr. Prinsep in his Preface as follows:—

"The British Government, has, since 1808, been the protector of the Sikh territory lying between the Sutluj and Jumna: its officers have been appealed to for the adjustment of all disputes between the chiefs and

their neighbours or dependants, and the references to the Supreme Council of Government at the Presidency are frequent, and involve questions of great intricacy, making the management of our relations in that quarter by no means the least troublesome part of the business submitted to its decision. Lord William Bentinck was led by the perception of this circumstance to seek from the officers employed in the management of Sikh affairs some general information as to the history and condition of the chiefs, and the habits and customs of the sect. Accordingly, when preparing for his journey to Hindustan, in 1830, he called upon Captain William Murray, the Political Agent at Umbala, who had for more than fifteen years been employed in conducting our relations with the Sikh chiefs on the British side of the Sutluj, for a Report upon the subject. Captain Wade, the Assistant at Lodiana, who had latterly been intrusted with the subordinate charge, under the Resident at Delhi, of the correspondence with Runjeet Singh, was similarly called upon, and both officers submitted voluminous Reports, con-

taining valuable information on all the points required. That of Captain Murray was the result of much reading and research, and was prepared from materials collected during the whole period of his residence amongst the Sikhs. He had evidently consulted with care all the Persian and other books that afford any insight into the history of the Sikhs, or of the Mogul and Afghan officers who came into contact or collision with them; while his account of the rise and fortunes of Runjeet Singh was compiled from the reports and verbal information of intelligent persons, who had served under him, corrected and tested by a laborious examination of the Akhbars, or native newspapers, files of which were recorded in his office: a valuable Appendix was added, containing the result of his personal observations and inquiries into the habits, customs, rules, and observances of the Sikhs. Unfortunately, this highly-esteemed and distinguished officer died very soon after the Governor-General visited those parts, when it was his lordship's intention to have requested him to prepare, from his Report, a

volume calculated to diffuse the information he had collected, and to give public and general utility to the result of his labours.

" There is no doubt that, if this officer had lived, the work would have been executed in a manner worthy of his abilities. His sudden death has rendered it necessary that what he left incomplete, and had put together in haste, without due order or arrangement, should be completed and revised by another hand. The whole of the historical part of his Report has been re-written, the arrangement has been partially altered, and the narrative has been cast into chapters, in the form it now assumes; besides which, there is new matter added from Captain Wade's Report, and from other sources. It has hence been impossible to place Captain Murray's name on the title-page as the author, so as to make him responsible, before the public, for what he never saw or approved. It will, however, be understood that, except in the tenth and eleventh Chapters of Continuation (the sixteenth and seventeenth of this work), the task of the compiler of the following pages has been merely

that of *rédacteur*, and that the merit of having collected the information, which gives to the work any interest or value it may possess, belongs almost entirely to Captain Murray. Indeed, next to the desire to rescue from the oblivion of a record-office information calculated to be so extensively useful, and to give to the public access to what had been collected with so much labour and research, the motive that has principally influenced the Compiler to undertake the preparation of this volume for the press, has been the wish to do honour to this distinguished and lamented officer, and to lay before his friends and the world a lasting testimony of his worth and talents.

"It may be proper to add, that while the first part of this work was already in the printer's hands, a Persian account of the affairs of the Sikhs in the Punjab was obligingly communicated to the compiler by Sir Charles Metcalfe. The manuscript had been delivered to Sir Charles by its author, Khooshwuqt Raee, who was for many years the agent and intelligencer of the British Government at Amritsur. The narrative

comes down to 1812 only, but is very full in respect to the early history of the Sikh sirdars, and contains much information and useful matter, not to be found elsewhere. The opportunity which was thus presented of comparing an original work of this kind with the Memoir of Captain Murray has not been lost. The result has afforded a satisfactory corroboration of the accuracy of this officer; indeed, the correspondence of date and circumstance, in many important particulars, leads almost to the conclusion, that Khooshwuqt Raee's narrative must have been amongst the materials from which the Memoir was prepared. Some occasional discrepancies, and additional facts or illustrations, have been noted separately at the close of the volume. The Compiler's grateful acknowledgments are particularly due to Sir Charles Metcalfe, for the liberal frankness with which so valuable a material has been made available to improve and correct this publication."

The recent events in the Punjab have attracted the attention of Europe to that por-

tion of India, and a deep interest has been excited in England respecting the scene of some of the most splendid achievements of our army in a country now united by intimate relations with Great Britain. It is much to be regretted that the present engagements of Mr. Prinsep do not allow him sufficient leisure to meet the public demand for information upon this subject by expanding his work (which has been long out of print) into a history of the Punjab, which his large stores of geographical, classical, and oriental knowledge, added to his official experience and information, would have rendered most valuable.

With the sanction of Mr. Prinsep for the use made of his volume, the office has been undertaken by the present Editor, who has supplied the first five and the last nine chapters of the work now before the reader.

LONDON,
May 11*th*, 1846.

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HISTORY OF THE PUNJAB,

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CHAPTER I.

HYDROGRAPHY OF THE PUNJAB.

THE region of North-Western India, known in modern times under the name of the Punjab, is remarkably well defined by geographical limits. On the north it has the Pir-Panjal range of the vast Himalaya mountains; on the west, the Khybur and Soliman ranges, and the great river Indus, which runs almost due south to the Indian Ocean, being the western boundary of Hindustan; whilst on the south and east, the river Sutluj separates it from the territories of what is now British India. The country is of an ovoidal form, lying between the

parallels of 29° and 34° north, and the meridians of 71° and 76° east, and its area is estimated at 85,000 square miles. Five large streams, the arteries of the Indus, traverse this region, and divide it into four doabs,* as the tracts inclosed betwixt the forks of two rivers are termed in the country, and give to it the name of *Punjab*, or 'Country of the Five Rivers.'† The modern names of these rivers, in their succession eastward from the Indus, are the Jelum, the Chenab, the Ravi, the Beas, and the Sutluj. A geographical description of the country will most properly commence with a delineation of the courses and characters of these great streams, which are not only its

* *Do-ab*, 'two rivers,' *i. e.* the tract which intervenes betwixt two rivers; corresponding to the Greek *Mesopotamia*.

† *Punj-ab*, 'Five Rivers.' The five streams are considered to include the Indus and exclude the Beas, on account of its short course. Strabo places the rivers, after the Indus, in the following order: "*Postea Hydaspes* (Jelum), *postea Acesines* (Chenab), *postea Hyarotes* (Ravi), *postremo Hypanis*." Unless by the last name (which other ancient geographers appropriate to the Sutluj) he means the Hyphasis, the Beas is omitted.

distinguishing physical features, enabling us to verify the earliest authentic accounts of this portion of India, recorded by the historians of Alexander the Great, who marched across the entire country of the Punjab; but which possess much importance in respect to the political, military, commercial, and agricultural relations of the country.

The Indus, or Sindh, as it has been called from time immemorial to the present day, by the natives,* is now known to have its remote and primitive source in the Kailasa range of the Himalayas, the Olympus of the Hindus, and the seat of their holiest myths (the highest elevation being estimated at 30,000 feet), in 31° 20′ N. lat., and 81° 15′ E. long., at a place called Kanre, Kangri, or Kantisi, a short distance to the south-east of Ghertope, where the great eastern branch of the Indus is called Sinh-ka-bab, or 'Lion's Mouth,' in reference to a Tibetan fable, which makes the rivers of India issue from

* The ancients knew that this was the native appellation. Pliny (lib. vi.) says: "*Indus incolis Sindus appellatus.*" The Greeks wrote the name Σινθος. The Chinese call the river Sin-tow.

the mouths of different animals.* After traversing the country of Chan-than, from the south-east to the north-west, it enters Ladakh, on its eastern frontier, about thirty miles east of Leh, its capital; bends more to the north, then inclines to the west, and having been joined by several large streams and mountain torrents, turns to the south, towards the plains, constituting the great receptacle of the masses of melted snow, which are periodically brought from the lofty ridges of Tibet, to fertilize the alluvial tracts of Western India. From the sudden melting of these vast accumulations of ice, and from temporary obstacles, occasioned by glaciers and avalanches in its upper course, this river is subject to irregularities, and especially to debacles, or cataclysms, one of which, attributed to a land-slip, in 1841, produced terrific devastation along its course, down even to Attock.†

At the confluence of the Sinh-ka-bab with the Shayuk, the principal river which joins

* Moorcroft's Travels, vol. i. pp. 261, 363.

† See a paper by Dr. Falconer in Journ. As. Soc. of Bengal, for 1841.

it on the north from the Karakorum mountains, the river takes the name of Aba Sindh, 'Father Sindh,' or Indus proper, and flowing then between lofty rocks, which confine its furious waters, receiving the tribute of various streams, and at Acho expanding into a broader surface, it reaches Derbend, the north-western angle of the Punjab, where (about 650 miles from its source) it is 100 yards wide in August, its fullest season. From Derbend it traverses a plain, in a broad channel of no great depth, to Attock, in 33° 54′ N. lat., 72° 18′ E. long., having, about 200 yards above this place, received the river of Cabul,* almost equal in breadth and volume, and attains a width of 858 feet, with a rapid boiling current, running at the rate (in August) of six miles an hour. Various accounts, however, are given of the breadth of the Indus at Attock, which depends not only upon the season but the state of the river upwards. The breadth was found by Mr. Elphinstone, in June, to be

* Considered to be the Cophenes of Arrian, and the Cophas of Strabo.

260 yards; by Mr. Trebeck, in November, about 100 yards; by Sir A. Burnes, in March, 120 yards. But Lieutenant Barr* found the river at Attock, in March, swollen with rain, had split into various branches, and bounded with resistless speed, dashing its waters into foam against the rocks. Its violence had swept away the bridge of boats.

This is the limit of the upward navigation of the Indus. From Attock (where the river takes this name†), the course of the Indus to the sea, 940 miles, is south and south-west, sometimes along a rocky channel, between high perpendicular cliffs, or forcing its way, tumbling and roaring, amidst huge boulders, the immense body of water being pent up within a narrow channel, causing occasional whirlpools, dangerous to navigation, to Kalabagh, in 32° 57′ N. lat., 71° 36′ E. long., situated in a gorge of the

* Journ. to Cabul, p. 193.

† From its being supposed to be the sacred boundary of Hindustan, *Attak*, or *Uttuk*, signifying 'forbidden.'

great Salt Range, through which the river rushes forth into the plain.* In this part of its course it has acquired the name of Nil-ab, or 'Blue Water,' from the colour imparted to it by the blue limestone hills through which it flows. There are some remains of a town on the bank of the river, named Nilab (where Timur crossed the Indus), supposed to be the Naulibus or Naulibe of Ptolemy.† From the middle of May to September, the upward navigation from Kalabagh to Attock is impracticable; the downward voyage may be performed at all seasons. The villages in this section of the river are perched on the verge of its banks, standing on the bare rock, without a blade of vegetation near them.‡

At Kalabagh, the Indus enters a level country, having, for a short time, the Khusooree hills, which rise abruptly, on the right. It now becomes muddy, and as far as Mittunkote, about 350 miles, the banks being low, the river, when it rises, inundates

* Wood, Journey to the Oxus, p. 103.
† Tab. ix. and x.
‡ Wood, p. 130.

the country sometimes as far as the eye can reach. Hence the channels are continually changing, and the soil of the country being soft,—a "mud basin," as Lieutenant Wood terms it,—the banks and bed of the river are undergoing constant alterations. These variations, added to the shoals, and the terrific blasts occasionally encountered in this part of the river, are great impediments to navigation. The population on its banks are almost amphibious; they launch upon its surface, sustained by inflated skins (mussuks), dried gourds, and empty jars used for catching the celebrated pulla fish.*

At Mittunkote, the Indus is often 2,000 yards broad, and near this place, in 28° 55′ N. lat., 70° 28′ E. long., it is joined, without violence, by the Punjnud,† a large navigable stream, the collected waters of the Sutluj, Beas, Ravi, Chenab, and Jelum. Its true channel, then a mile and a quarter wide, flows thence through Sinde, sometimes se-

* A kind of carp, of delicious flavour, only found in the four months that precede the periodical swell of the river.

† Signifying, like *Punjab*, 'Five Rivers.'

vered into distinct streams, and discharges its different branches by various mouths into the Indian Ocean, after a course of 1,650 miles.

The Indus, when joined by the Punjnud, never shallows, in the dry season, to less than fifteen feet, and seldom preserves so great a breadth as half a mile. Keeled boats are not suited to its navigation, as they are liable to be upset. The zohruks, or native boats, are flat-bottomed. Gold is found in some parts of the sands of the Indus.

The Jelum,* which is identified with the "*fabulosus Hydaspes*" of the ancients, the next of the Punjab rivers to the east, rises in the valley of Cashmere, and draining its waters, flows westerly, making its exit at the Pass of Baramula, and joins the Kishengunga, or Hasora river (little inferior in size to the Jelum here), near Mazufferabad, 150 miles

* Its Sanscrit name is *Vitastha; Vayat* and *Behut* in the dialects; the *Betusta* of the *Ayeen Akberi*. The latter, which is still its local name near Jelalpore (the supposed site of the battle between Alexander and Porus), is the probable origin of the *Hydaspes* of Arrian, and the *Bidaspis* of Ptolemy. It is called both *Dendan* and *Jamad* by Sherif-eddin.

from its source, and only sixty miles apart from the Indus; it then pursues a southerly course, and enters the plains of the Punjab, as a large stream. Its current is impetuous along the channel that winds round the base of the Cashmere mountains. At the town of Jelum, its breadth is greater than that of the Indus before it joins the Cabul river above Attock, being above 450 feet. It is navigable from Bhalani, a village about 110 miles above that town, flowing then at the rate of a mile an hour. Below Jelum its course deflects to the westward, and more so at Jelalpore (where there is a ghat or ferry); at Sahiwal it resumes a southern direction through a flat country, and joins the Chenab in 31° 11′ 30″ N. lat., 72° 9′ E. long., after a course of 450 miles, the united streams forming a noble river, a mile broad. Alligators are more numerous in the Jelum than in the other Punjab rivers.

The Chenab,* the Acesines of the Greeks,

* The Sanscrit *Chandrabhaga*, or 'Moon-garden;' the *Chanderbaka* of the *Ayeen Akberi;* the *Acesines* of Arrian, and the *Sandabilis* (evidently derived from the Sanscrit name) of Ptolemy.

is the largest of the five great feeders of the Indus. Its source, which has never been reached by Europeans, is placed in the high land of Tibet, about 32° 50′ N. lat., 77° 40′ E. long. After its junction with the Suryabhaga ('Sun-garden'), at Tandi, in 32° 30′ N. lat., 76° 55′ E. long., it first receives the name of Chandrabhaga, from its supposed source in a lake of that name. It is here 200 feet broad, flowing north-west to Kishtewar, in the Himalayas, 130 miles, where it is crossed by a timber bridge, thrown across the rocky chasm, sixty feet deep, worn by the river between two perpendicular walls of gneiss; the centre of the bridge is supported by two huge timbers, the ends of which rest upon fourteen levers projecting on each side, and retained in their places by immense masses of broken rock.* It flows thence south-west, by a tortuous course, through a rugged country, past Doda, to Rihursi, ninety miles, where it leaves the mountains on the north-west, and after flowing to the south, along the edge of the plain, it inclines to the south-west, running through jungle to the open plains of the

* Vigne, Travels in Kashmir, vol. i. p. 201.

Punjab, and at Aknur, fifty miles further, it becomes navigable. At Kishtewar it has the name of Chin-ao, and in the plains, Chin-ab, both indicating its connection with Chin, or China, whence Mr. Moorcroft conjectures,* that the Greek name, *Ace-Sines*, might have a similar origin. It continues to flow south-westerly and westerly to Vazeerabad, the neatest-looking city in the Punjab, where Mr. Elphinstone's mission, in July, 1809, found it to be a mile, three furlongs, and thirty perches, from bank to bank.† Later travellers have diminished its breadth here; Baron Hügel ‡ to half a mile, and Mr. Vigne § to between 200 and 300 yards, "with flat banks and a muddy stream."

From Vazeerabad, it holds a south-westerly course for thirty miles to Ramnuggur, where, in the low season, it is 900 feet wide, with a maximum depth of nine feet, and a current of a mile and a half an hour. After a south-westerly course of 540 miles, it joins

* Travels, vol. i. p. 196.
† Mission to Cabul, p. 660.
‡ Kaschmir, vol. iii. p. 147.
§ Travels, vol. i. p. 238.

the Jelum, about the parallel of 31° 10′, and the combined streams, flowing fifty miles further south-west, unite with the Ravi, below Fazilpore, 30° 33′ N. lat., 71° 46′ E. long., where the Chenab (the name retained by the joint stream) is, at the full season, three-quarters of a mile wide, and twelve feet deep. From thence it continues its course, still south-westerly, for 110 miles, to its confluence with the Ghara, or mingled streams of the Sutluj and Beas, in lat. 29° 21′, long. 71° 6′, where, after a course of 700 miles, it is lost in the Punjnud.

The Jelum and Chenab have been forded in the cold season, but, when joined, have never been passed but by boats. Timur threw a bridge across the conflux at Trimo ferry, and Runjeet Singh swam the Jelum at Sahiwal, with a large body of horse. The merchants from Persia to India cross at Trimo for Toolumba on the Ravi.

The Ravi,* the Hydraotes and Hyarotis

* In Sanscrit, *Iravati*, in the local dialect *Iraoti* (the *Irrawaddy* of the *Ayeen Akberi*), which doubtless suggested the names of *Hydraotes* in Arrian, and *Hyarotis* in Strabo. Ptolemy calls this river *Adris*.

of the ancient geographers, the least of the Punjab rivers, has its source in the country of Burmawur, in Tartary, about 32° 30′ N. lat., 76° 25′ E. long. Its principal source is said to be a little lake, named Muni-mys. It passes the city of Chamba, in the Punjabi Himalayas, first visited by Mr. Vigne,* where it is called Raiva, and, on debouching from the mountains at Bisuli, takes and preserves a south-west course, though a very tortuous one, receiving various tributary streams, and acquires the name of Ravi. Near Lahore, it divides into three branches (one of which runs close to the city), and joins the Chenab, after a course of 450 miles from its source. Though not deep, it is navigable from Lahore to its confluence with the Chenab, but its sinuosities almost double the distance. It is a foul river, its water having in some parts a red tinge, and it is much studded with sand-banks, many of which are dangerous quicksands. It traverses generally a flat country, but near Lahore its banks sometimes rise to a perpendicular height of forty feet.

* Travels in Kashmir, vol. i. p. 153.

The Beas, or Beah,* the Hyphasis of Arrian, the Bibasis of Ptolemy, has a course of little more than 200 miles. It rises in Lahoul, in the Himalayas, 32° 24′ N. lat., and 77° 12′ E. long., and takes a southerly course, from the Ritanka pass, for forty miles, then turns sharply to the west, to Mundee, and, receiving a considerable accession from mountain streams, reaches Nadaun, whence it inclines from the west to the north-west, for about eighty miles, and entering the plains of the Punjab, in N. lat. 32° 5′, E. long. 75° 25′, it bends to the south, and holds a southerly and south-westerly course, for eighty miles, till its bright blue waters mingle with those of the turbid Sutluj, in lat. 31° 12′, long. 74° 56′, three miles above Huree-ke-puttun. The united waters, which do not commix for a mile below the junction, form a large stream, the actual channel, according to Burnes, exceeding a

* The Sanscrit word is *Vyasa*, the name of a Rishi, or sage, celebrated in the classical literature of India. The local name, *Vipasa* or *Beypasha*, is supposed to have originated the *Bibasis* of Ptolemy, the *Hypasis* of Pliny, and the *Hyphasis* of *Arrian*.

mile and a half in breadth. Both the Ravi and the Beas rise to the west of the Chenab, although they run east of it in the plains, being included, as it were, within an arch or semi-circular sweep, made by the latter river.

The Sutluj, or Sutluk,* the Hesudrus of antiquity, is the most eastern of the five rivers. The exact locality of its source has not yet been ascertained; but it is supposed to be at a very great elevation on the southern face of the Kailasa range, in about 31° 5′ N. lat., 81° 6′ E. long., whence it flows into the sacred lake Rawan-hrad, issuing again from its north-western extremity, and taking its rapid course, as a raging torrent, in that direction, for about 150 miles, through a country almost inaccessible to man, as far as Nako, lat. 31° 50′, where it receives the Leh, or Spiti river, from the north. The rocky gulf, at the confluence of the Sutluj and Leh river, where the bed

* To its Sanscrit names, *Sitloda*, *Satadru*, or *Sutrudra*, the other names can be retraced,—the *Hesudrus* of Pliny, the *Zaradrus* of Ptolemy, the *Saranges* of Arrian, the *Shetooder* and *Seteluj* of the *Ayeen Akberi*.

of the stream is still 8,494 feet above the level of the sea, is described by travellers as a scene of awful sublimity, and one of the wonders of the natural world. After rounding the outer Himalayas, it splits into many streams, but re-unites in one channel as it approaches the Sewalik range, its general course being to the south-west. Shortly after leaving Belaspore, 31° 21′ N. lat., 76° 41′ E. long., the river makes a sweep to the north-west, then south-west, then south-east. A few miles above Roopur, in lat. 30° 58′, long. 76° 29′, it emerges from the hills in a variety of distinct streams, and enters the plain of the Punjab, no longer retaining its blue mountain tinge, but expanding into a muddy river, running through a swampy country: when full, it is 1,500 feet wide and 30 feet deep.* From Roopur it flows nearly west to Lodiana, where it divides into two branches. From the ferry of Philoor, where its breadth is 2,100 feet, the river is navigable at all seasons; but its channel is variable, the bed of the river

* Vigne, Travels in Kashmir, vol. i. p. 53.

often changing several miles in a single season. The narrowness of the deep channel is a great impediment to navigation, but steamers have ascended to twenty miles above Lodiana. In December there are several tolerable fords between Roopur and Ferozepore, over which an army might pass, but they are all more or less dangerous. Its whole course till its junction with the Beas is 570 miles. Below this confluence, the conjoined stream bears the name of Ghara,* till at Ooch it unites with the Chenab to form the Punjnud,† "without turmoil," the Chenab appearing as large above the conflux as below it. The water of either river is to be distinguished some miles after the junction; that of the Chenab being reddish, that of the Ghara, pale.

Until within the last fifteen years, the rivers of the Punjab were scarcely better known in Europe than by the Greek geo-

* Mohan Lal (Travels, p. 384) says it is so called because of its muddiness; "the people call every thing muddy *ghara*."

† This name, according to Burnes, is not known to the natives.

graphers.* Since the mission of Sir Alexander Burnes, in 1831, most of them have been examined from the place where they are navigable to their confluence with another stream.

The native vessels used upon these rivers are rude, but they are not ill-adapted to the peculiarities of their navigation. They differ, rather in size than in construction, upon the several streams. The *zohruk*, the *nawuk*, and the *dondah* are nearly all flat-bottomed, and, though clumsily formed, are strong and safe. The first, used mostly upon the Indus, is square-built, fore and aft, rounded at both ends, the burthen from forty to fifty tons, and carries no sail. The nawuk and dondah are found principally upon the Chenab and the Sutluj; they have pointed bows and sterns. Where the navigation of the Jelum commences, the boats are large, the planks being put together with great nicety, but they have no sails. The boats of the Sutluj

* Dr. Robertson, writing in 1791, speaks of the Punjab as a "fertile and extensive region of India, with which we are at present little acquainted."—Disqu. on Anc. India, note iv.

and Beas are flat-bottomed, shaped like a snuffers-tray, with a high projecting peak, and from five to twelve tons burthen. Their make is clumsy; not a nail is used in their construction, but they are admirably adapted for passage-boats, and cannot be upset. For long trips, there are the Indus boats, which are better built, and not only navigate safely to the very mouth of the river, but have comfortable cabins for passengers. These boats have one huge sail, with bamboos tied together for yards, which is hoisted when the wind is fair. But the main dependence is upon the force of the current in descending, and the track-rope upwards is drawn by the boatmen (called *mullahs*—the Ganges boatmen are called *dandis*), a fine-looking, hard-working class of Musulmans.

The natives resort to more simple modes of crossing the rivers of the Punjab, upon inflated buffalo and sheep-skins, the mouth of which is sewn up, and the legs made air-tight, below the knee and hock-joints, so that the figure of the animal is somewhat preserved, and they are thus easily carried. Burnes says, he has seen upon the Indus,

"a man with his wife and children in the middle of the stream, the father on a skin, dragging his family, seated upon reeds, their clothes and chattels forming a bundle for the head." Much art is required to manage these air-bags; Lieutenant Wood nearly lost his life in attempting to bestride a mussuk.*

Of late years, steam navigation has been introduced upon the Indus, the Ravi, and the Sutluj. Notwithstanding the narrowness of the deep channels in this river, three large steamers have been to Ferozepore, and one to Macheewala, twenty miles above Lodiana. It is not doubted that boats built for the purpose could navigate the Sutluj, throughout the year, to Roopur.†

* Burnes, Travels in Bokhara, vol. iii. pp. 129, 303. Vigne, Travels in Kashmir, vol. i. p. 65. Wood, Journey to the Oxus, p. 110. Moorcroft, Travels in the Himalayas, vol. ii. p. 305. Lawrence, Adventures in the Punjab, vol. ii. p. 116. Calcutta Review, No. III. art. 5.

† Calcutta Review, *ut sup.*

CHAPTER II.

THE DOABS.

THE Punjab is an extensive, flat plain, with mountains to the north and west, and open to the south and east. The rivers, the courses and characteristics of which have been just described, divide the Punjab, properly so called, into *doabs*, or intra-fluvian tracts. The names of these doabs (except those between the Indus and the Jelum, and the Beas and Sutluj) are compounded of the names of both rivers: a fact noticed by the Greek writers, furnishing one evidence, amongst many, of the minute accuracy of their descriptions. "The greater part of this country," says Arrian, "is level and champaign, which is occasioned, as some suppose, by the rivers working down mud during their inundations, so that some of the countries have borrowed their names from the rivers which pass through them." Thus

the tract between the Chenab and Behut (Jelum) is named the Chenut doab; that between the Ravi and the Chenab, the Reechna doab; and that between the Beas and the Ravi, the Bari doab.

The district lying between the Indus and the Jelum (called the Sindsagur doab), 147 miles broad in the widest part, whilst it is the largest, is the most sterile and least inhabited, abounding with undulating bare eminences, and rugged declivities. To the north and north-centre, it is intersected by many ranges and ridges of hills, between which, however, are rich valleys. Dr. Jameson says, from Rotas to Mari, on the Indus, the whole country consists of extensive plains, surrounded by mountains, in general barren in the extreme. To the south extends the great desert, 250 miles long, and between 30 and 40 wide, to Multan on one side, and Dera Ghazi Khan on the other. Towards Mittunkote, in the narrow tract, cultivation increases, the soil being rich; but the chief produce of this doab is derived from its salt-mines, between Jelalpore and Pind Dadan Khan. The two rivers, when

flowing in deep beds, with high, steep banks, cannot be employed in irrigation. Great part of the country is covered with thickets and jungle. Near the town of Jelum, upon the river of that name, it is broken by ravines and irregular ridges. The soil is clay, much intermixed with sand. Between Jelum and Rotas, the country is level and cultivated; beyond Rotas it is rough and broken, with occasional cultivation, but not of great extent. The land below where the Indus joins the Punjab rivers is of the richest character, particularly on the east bank.

The derajats (or camps) of Ghazi Khan and Ismael Khan are beyond the Indus; but the plains are occupied by the Sikhs.

The Sind doab is a very strong country; the northern, from its mountainous character, and the southern part being a desert, without water. After crossing the Dunnee plains, the traveller finds himself entangled in formidable ravines. The people of this doab are called Sind Singh.

The Chenut doab, between the Jelum and the Chenab, is in one part only forty-six miles broad. It is level, except where the exten-

sion of the Great Salt Range, which springs from the root of the Sufeed Koh, crosses the Indus at Karabagh, and reaches to the Jelum, terminating in low hills on the left bank of this river. Burnes describes it as "a sterile waste of underwood." The country for the most part is covered with jungle, amongst which lie miserable, dirty villages, under the shade of tamarinds and acacias, surrounded by fields of wheat, gram, jowari (*holcus sorghum*), cotton-plant, and sugar-cane. The soil is in general light and sandy; it is scantily irrigated by wells, the water from which is raised by the common Persian wheel. Numerous herds of cattle, camels, sheep, and goats feed upon the grass and weeds. The country has a wretched aspect in the higher parts; but where the rivers unite in the Punjnud, the pasture is rich, extensive grass plains appear, and the banks of the river are studded with numerous hamlets. Between the lower Chenab and the Indus, there is a large desert tract; but the banks of the Chenab round Multan are highly cultivated. The Sikhs in this doab are distinguished by the name of

Dhanigheb Singh, and sometimes Gujarat Singh.

The Reechna doab, between the Chenab and the Ravi, is seventy-six miles in its widest part, and consists of an arid plain, the soil light and sandy, capable of being converted into a most fertile tract, and of producing any crops, by irrigation; but, although better cultivated and more fertile than the Chenut doab, it is now, to the extent of at least one-third, either *thur* (desert), or overgrown with jungle, the only cultivated land being in the immediate vicinity of the towns and villages. The country between Trimo, on the Chenab, and Toolumba, on the Ravi, is a sheet of hard clay, with clumps of tamarisk and other desert shrubs, not a blade of grass appearing beyond the banks of the rivers. The water from the wells (which are thirty feet deep) is scarce, and always fetid and noxious. Large neglected canals prove that, in former times, navigation was an object of greater attention. The Sikhs in this doab have the designation of Dharpi Singh.

The Bari doab (sometimes called Manja,

whence the Sikhs resident here are called Manja Singh), between the Ravi and Beas, the narrowest of the doabs, being only forty-four miles broad, is the most neglected; although susceptible of the highest cultivation, and although the two capitals of the Sikh state, Amritsur and Lahore, are included within it. Even between these two cities the country is covered with low bushes, and but partially cultivated, especially to the north-east. Upon approaching Lahore, the country looks as if purposely devastated. The Sutluj, by its extensive inundations in the rainy season, remedies in some measure the apathy of man, by producing spontaneous fertility. The soil is generally a hard, indurated clay, sometimes gravelly, producing thorny shrubs and brambles, upon which herds of nilghaos find subsistence. Lower down, the soil is strong, and rather fertile, but little cultivated, and overrun with jungle and small wood. Burnes states that the soil amply repays the labour, for, such is its strength, that a crop of wheat, before yielding its grain, is twice mown down as fodder for cattle, and then produces an

abundant harvest. Irrigation, which would make this tract a garden, is totally disregarded, and the canals constructed by the Mahomedan conquerors of the country are suffered to fall into decay.

The Jullinder (or Jalendra) doab, the smallest, between the Beas and Sutluj, is in a better condition than the other intra-fluvian tracts, and is said to be excelled in climate and productions by no province of India. From the town of Jullinder to the banks of the Sutluj, the country is highly cultivated and well-peopled. Villages are numerous near the river, and the peasantry appear contented and happy. The soil is light, but productive; water is found in abundance near the surface. Burnes describes the cultivated parts of the country as resembling a vast meadow, entirely free from underwood, wheat-fields extending for miles without a hedge. This luxuriant landscape, however, is elsewhere exchanged for immense tracts of jungle.

Between the Sutluj and Lodiana, the country is very low, not alluvial, but sandy, and intersected by nullas, one of which was

the bed of the river fifty years ago. The aptitude of the Sutluj to change its course, which has been already noticed, creates many a bitter feud; a single season often changes the bed several miles, and crops sown on one side of the stream may be reaped by a proprietor on the other. In the plains, observes Major Lawrence,* the Sutluj runs through a line of country six miles broad, and from twenty to one hundred feet lower than the general surrounding level. This tract is called *khadir*, as the high adjoining lands are called *bangur*. Through any portion of this bed of six miles, the river is liable to force a new channel, and every year does, more or less, change its course. The waters begin to rise in April, and towards July come down in so full a stream, as often to inundate the villages on the banks. The general influence of these floods is beneficial, the low

* The able article in the Calcutta Review (No. III. art. 5) is attributed to this gentleman (the author of the sprightly adventures in the Punjab) upon report, and upon the intrinsic evidence furnished by the accuracy of its local information.

(khadir) lands being sown with rice; but, occasionally, whole villages are swept away, and large deposits of sand are left upon a rich soil.*

This tendency to desert their channels is a property of most, if not all, of the Punjab rivers. Bands of sand traverse the country, north and south, indicating the old beds of rivers; the Ravi, which, twenty years ago, washed the city of Lahore, runs now in a channel three miles to the northward; the Chenab, which, within twelve years, ran close to the town of Ramnuggur, is now four miles distant, and the same remark applies to the Jelum.

The Sikhs of the Jalendra doab are call[illegible] [illegible]nce Doaba Singh, and those on the left bank [illegible] the Sutluj, Malawa Singh.

There must either have been some exaggeration in the early accounts of the fertility of the Punjab, or its condition in this respect

* Burnes, Travels in Bokhara, vol. iii. p. 184. Lawrence, Adventures in the Punjab, vol. ii. p. 117. Von Orlich, Travels in India, vol. i. p. 159. Calcutta Review, No. III. art. 5.

has greatly deteriorated.* Mr. Elphinstone says that, except near the rivers, no part will bear a comparison with the British provinces in India; that the soil, in the part he passed through, was generally sandy, and by no means rich, and on the whole, not one-third of the country he saw was cultivated.† Dr. Jameson represents the plain of the Punjab as a waste, comparatively speaking, with occasional cultivation. "Proceeding from Lahore to Jelalpore," he says, "we pass over vast uncultivated tracts, with here and there, in the centre of the bushy jungle, a small village, with some rich cultivated fields around; now and then, breaking up the monotony of the flat plain, we meet with hillocks, marking the sites of towns and villages which are now no more, or deep ravines, the haunt of the wolf and the jackal."‡ Mr. Vigne, who crossed the plains of the Punjab repeatedly, says, they are,

* The revenue of the province of Lahore, in the reign of Aurungzeb, was, according to Bernier, £2,500,000 per annum.

† Account of Cabul, p. 81.

‡ Report on the Geology, &c. of the Punjab.—Journ. As. Soc. of Bengal, 1843, p. 195.

generally speaking, but partially cultivated. In the winter months, he adds, the land around the villages is covered with green patches of wheat and barley, divided by small furrows, which are filled with water by means of the Persian wheel. The villages appear a dusty confusion of mud walls. A few trees are seen in the gardens or near the wells; but the plains, which are more or less sandy, are scantily covered with the thorny camel-plant, stunted byr-apple, or jujube, and occasionally an isolated babul (*mimosa Arabica*) may be seen. This, he says, is the general aspect of the Punjab.*

The soil varies in a remarkable degree from stiff clay to sand, mixed with each other in variable proportions, and with vegetable matter. Between Jelalpore and Pind Dadun Khan, it consists of a black rich loam, the finest Dr. Jameson saw in the Punjab.

No country in the East, perhaps in the world, enjoys in a greater proportion to its extent the means of artificial irrigation; although, as before remarked, some of its

* Travels in Kashmir, vol. i. p. 234.

rivers flow in deep beds, the simple mechanical contrivances of the natives might diffuse the waters of the others over the sandy and clayey tracts. Water, however, is seldom raised artificially for irrigation; when it is so raised, the well-known Persian wheel is employed, worked by bullocks or camels, the machinery being placed over a *khureez*,* or a cut in the river's bank. In a dry country, land is of little value that is not irrigated by river inundation, or by wells; so that landed possessions in the Sikh country are calculated not by measurement, but by the number of wells. Each well is protected by a tower, into which the husbandman flies in case of emergency. These towers are often met with in tracts once cultivated, but now desert wilds.

The inferior towns throughout the Punjab are, generally speaking, only large villages,

* The khureez, or kharaiz (a contrivance for irrigation very common in Persia) is thus described by Lieut. Wood: "Shafts are sunk about every fifty yards, and connected by a gallery under-ground, along which the stream is conducted by a tunnel, often for several miles."

containing a fort, or the residence of a Sikh chief. On the right bank of the Jelum, near Jelalpore, where the soil is fertile, the villages, perched upon the hills, are romantic in their situation, and the houses, which are comfortable within, are plastered with a grey-coloured earth, which gives them a cleanly external appearance. The dwellings generally of the Punjabis are flat, or terrace-roofed, built either of sun-dried bricks in a wooden frame, or they consist of a wooden frame covered with mud. The villages, in some parts, and even in the vicinity of Lahore, are temporary, being the moveable hamlets of the pastoral Cathi, or Juns.

The climate, excepting in the northern and mountainous tracts, is dry, very little rain falling in the plains, especially in the south. On the hills, as well as towards the sea, and where the monsoon is felt, as far as Lahore, the rains are sometimes heavy. In the winter the weather is cold, and even frosty during the night. The heat in summer is intense, and scarcely tolerable to Europeans, who have experienced near Lahore, in June, a temperature of 113° after

ten o'clock, A.M. "I never felt any thing like the heat," Mr. Osborne says; "even before three o'clock in the morning, on the 16th of June, the thermometer must have been upwards of 100°, and a stifling, sultry atmosphere, that made it painful to breathe."* Baron Hügel describes the heat of the Punjab as "dreadful."

Nothing like an accurate calculation of the amount of the population inhabiting the Punjab has hitherto been given; there are, indeed, no materials upon which to found such a calculation. Their aggregate number has been roughly estimated at from 3,500,000 to 5,000,000.† By Burnes and all travellers, the Punjab is considered to be a poorly-peopled country, in proportion to its habitable area and its capabilities.

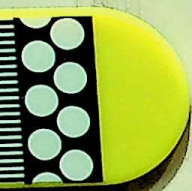
The people are of various races; the hilly provinces in the north are inhabited by Tibetans and Cashmerians; and in the plains, Patans, the descendants of Afghan conquerors, and the progeny of Hindus from ultra-

* Court of Runjeet Singh, p. 137.

† Thornton's Gazetteer, art. *Punjab*, vol. ii. p. 133.

Sutluj India, are mixed with Jats and Cathis, who compose the bulk of the Punjabis, properly so called. The Khalas, or Sikhs, do not amount to much more than a fourth part of the entire population; there are none westward of the Jelum, and to the eastward of Lahore, where they are said to predominate, Burnes states that they do not compose one-third. "It is astonishing," says Major Lawrence, "how seldom a Sikh is met in what is called the Sikh territory."

Historical associations of much interest attach to the Jat race, which is widely disseminated throughout India, under the names of Jit, Jut, and Jat; by the latter they are known on the Jumna and Ganges; by that of Jut, on the Indus and in Saurashtra, and as Jits in the Punjab. Evidence from the history of different nations, too strong to be resisted, identifies them with the Scythian Getes, as they are called by classical authors, Yuĕ-che, or Yuĕ-te, as they are denominated by the historians of China, whose original seat was in Central Asia, and who, after extending their authority over the modern Afghanistan, invaded India in the fifth cen-

tury, and established themselves in the Punjab and in Rajpootana.* The Jits continued to form powerful communities in these countries, and on the east bank of the Indus, for six centuries later; Mahmud of Ghuzni encountered a desperate resistance from them, in 1026, in the neighbourhood of Multan; and Baber complains that, in his progress through the Punjab, he was assailed by prodigious numbers of Jits. All the traditions of the Jits point to the regions west of the Indus as the cradle of their race. "A Jit informed me," says Colonel Tod, "that their *wuttun* was far beyond the Five Rivers." De Guignes and Remusat, from Asiatic authorities, have traced the invasions or migrations of the Yuĕ-te from Tartary to the Punjab in the fifth and sixth centuries of our era; and the overthrow of the great

* Colonel Tod (Annals of Rajasthan, vol. i. p. 795) has published an inscription, which fixes the year A.D. 409 as the date of the colonization of the Punjab by Jits from the Jaxartes. This was the exact period when the Chinese traveller Fă-hëen was in India, and he mentions the fact of an invasion of the Punjab by the Getes, or Yuĕ-te.

Scythian empire in Central Asia by Timur, in A.D. 1388, occasioned a further influx of Getes into the countries of Western India. "This celebrated race," observes Colonel Tod, "appears to have been the most numerous, as well as the most conspicuous, tribe of ancient Asia, from the days of Tomyris and Cyrus, to those of the present Jit prince of Lahore," namely, Runjeet Singh.

The agricultural peasantry of the Punjab are mostly of this race. The Cathis are a pastoral tribe, and as Jun, their other name, denotes, live an erratic life. These people have likewise an historical reputation, since they are incontestably the Cathæi who offered so determined a resistance to the great Macedonian invader. They were then confined to the country near the Punjnud; their own traditions fix their emigration from the south-east part of the valley of the Indus about the eighth century. Colonel Tod* describes the genuine Cathi as "a fine specimen of purely natural production; his manly form, open countenance, and independent gait, forming a

* Travels in Western India, p. 306.

striking contrast to the careworn peasantry of other districts." Captain McMurdo* says, "a character possessed of more energy than a Cathi, does not exist." With an athletic frame, their height often exceeds six feet. They have light hair and blue eyes, which Tod (who believed them to be a tribe originally from Central Asia) not unreasonably regards as evidence of a Scythic origin, though Burnes considers the Cathi (or Kattias), "a tall, stout, and handsome race," as the aborigines of the country.† They live in scattered villages, and move their houses from place to place, rearing immense herds of buffaloes and camels, but scarcely ever condescending to cultivate the soil. Their habits are likewise predatory.

In the upper part of the Jelum, and in the town of that name, the people are mostly Mahomedans, and though much intermixed with Cashmerians, are darker and worse looking.‡ Higher up that river, the inhabi-

* Transactions of the Bombay As. Soc. vol. i. p. 270.

† Travels in Bokhara, vol. iii. p. 130.

‡ Moorçroft, vol. ii. p. 308.

tants of the country are exclusively Mahomedans; and at Bhalani, where the navigation of the Jelum begins, the population consists of Rajpoots, "idle, inhospitable, and arrogant."* Lower down the same river, are found the pastoral Cathis, seldom at a great distance from the rivers except in the rainy season; but they extend from the banks of the Jelum across the whole country of the Punjab, and even to Delhi. Many of the villages on the Ravi, which is peopled from its mouth, are merely temporary encampments, or moveable hamlets, of this tribe. On the banks of the Sutluj, where it enters the Punjab, the peasantry consists of Jats, Hindus, and Mahomedans, with a few Sikhs. The Mahomedans in this part are either Jats, or converts from Hinduism, and Burnes remarks, as a curious fact, that the Mahomedans predominate on the southern bank, in the vicinity of the Hindus.† The reason probably is, that the oppression of the Sikhs, who cherish a hereditary dislike towards the Mahomedans, causes them to emigrate to the

* Moorcroft, vol. ii. p. 304.

† Travels in Bokhara, vol. i. p. 4.

south. Near Lodiana, the inhabitants are exclusively agricultural, but after the Sutluj has been joined by the Beas, the habits of the people are predatory. They are known under various denominations, Dogur, Julmairi, Salairi, &c., and by the general one of Raat, and they live in perpetual hostility with each other. A large proportion of the Hindu population are of Rajpoot descent. "We have often," says Major Lawrence,* "been amused at hearing the wild Goojurs, Dogurs, and Rangurs, tell tales of their Chohan and Rhatore ancestors." The predatory character seems to attach to many of the tribes inhabiting the banks of all the rivers in their lower course.

The most remarkable circumstance in the population of the Punjab is the paucity of Sikhs in a country ruled by them. The mother country of the Khalsas is the tract between the Ravi and Sutluj; but few are to be found thirty miles below Lahore, and none beyond the Jelum. The entire number of the Sikhs throughout the Punjab is not supposed to exceed 500,000.

* Calcutta Rev. *ut supra.*

The men in the Manja or Bari doab, between the Ravi and Beas, are reputed to be the bravest and most warlike of the Punjabis. The Sikhs who inhabit the country between the Sutluj and Jumna are called Malawa Singh, a title conferred upon them for their extraordinary gallantry, under their leader Banda, the successor of Guru Govind, the founder of the Sikh nation. The Malawa Sikhs are almost all converts from the Hindu tribes of Jats and Gujurs.

"There is, perhaps, no inland country of the globe," says Burnes, "which possesses greater facilities for commerce than the Punjab, and there are few more rich in the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms. Its productions relieve it from any great dependence on external supply, whilst it can carry on a traffic with the neighbouring countries of Persia and Tartary, China and India." Its staple commodities of trade are the shawl manufactures of Cashmere; but the Multan silks, manufactured from imported raw silk (for the worm is not reared in the province), enjoy a high reputation in the Indian market. Lahore and Amritsur

participate with Multan in the manufacture of satins. The cotton cloths of the eastern portion of the Punjab, though inferior in appearance to the British, are stronger and more durable, as well as cheaper.* The finer cloths are exported to the south of the Sutluj. The salt-mines furnish an extensive article of trade, the supply being apparently inexhaustible. This rock salt is stated by Dr. Jameson to be so pure as only to require grinding. It varies in colour from white to flesh or brick red; it is granular, the concretions being very large and compact, so much so, that ornamental articles are cut out of it.† The geological structure of the country affords reason to believe that, when its mineral resources are explored, other metals besides iron, which is found in great quantity, and of excellent quality, will be discovered. Gold is obtained from the sands of the Indus. Between Attock and Kalabagh, about 300 persons are employed in washing the sand for gold, which occurs in small flattened grains. Coal may be pro-

* Burnes, vol. ii. p. 397.

† Report, *ut supra*, p. 201.

cured in several parts of the Punjab, where it is not used as a fuel, but, strange to say, as a medicine.

The chief agricultural products are sugar, indigo, cotton, tobacco, and opium; rice (which is not suited to the palates of the people), wheat, barley, gram, moong (*phaseotus mungo*), mut (*phaseolus aconilifolius*), bajri (*holcus spicatus*), and other grain: and most of the vines and fruits common to Europe are found in the northern provinces of Cashmere and Kishtewar.

CHAPTER III.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE PUNJAB.

THE earliest accounts of the Punjab are given by the historians of the expedition of Alexander the Great, in the fourth century before the Christian era. Although the rulers of ancient Persia extended their conquests over part of India, and the Indian possessions of Darius Hystaspes, the most valuable of his twenty satrapies, are supposed to have included the Punjab, we have few recorded facts upon this point, and no testimony beyond the authority of Herodotus, and the doubtful voyage of Scylax down the Indus.* The peculiar character of the country, and the general fidelity and accuracy of the Greek writers, permit us to trace the movements of the Macedonian conqueror with more precision than might have been expected, considering the great lapse of time,

* Herod. lib. iii. c. 90; lib. iv. c. 44.

the loss of the original journal of Megasthenes, and the corruptions of the ancient texts.

Alexander entered India at the very point where it is most easily assailed. He passed the Indus in the district of Peucelaotis (as Arrian writes the name), or Peucolaitis (according to Strabo), and Rennell supposes that he crossed the river at Attock, where it was passed by subsequent conquerors. The bridge of boats which had been prepared by Hephæstion and their ally Taxiles, as described by Arrian,* corresponds very nearly with that used at the present day. Boats are fixed in the stream a short distance from each other, by skeleton frameworks of wood filled with stones, and the communication is completed by planks covered with mud.† Having effected his passage in the month of May, B.C. 327, he halted his army for thirty days, to refresh the soldiers, who had undergone severe service in fighting their way to the river through the warlike and ferocious tribes which inhabited the mountainous districts on the other side.

* Lib. v. c. 7.

† Burnes, vol. iii. p. 284.

This portion of India was then partitioned amongst a great number of petty princes, independent of, and often in hostility with, each other. At this critical period, two of the most powerful of these rajas, named Taxiles and Porus, were at war, and the former, in order to crush his adversary, joined the invader. The territory of Taxiles appears to have been the doab between the Indus and the Hydaspes (Jelum); that of Porus, who had subdued most of his neighbours, extended as far as the Hyphasis.

Alexander had an army of 135,000 men, 15,000 being cavalry, with a great number of elephants. This force included a large body of hardy m[illegible] mercenaries from the hills west of the Indus, and north of the Punjab, under a chief named Ambisares. At the head of this force he marched to the Hydaspes, which he reached in the month of August. On the other (left) side of the river Porus was posted, with 30,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry, 200 elephants, and 300 war-chariots. Alexander, finding the river much swollen by the rains, sent for boats

from the Indus, which were brought overland, in the meanwhile amusing Porus by marching and counter-marching his troops along the bank of the river, as if searching for a ford. On the arrival of the boats, he passed the river at Jelalpore, 114 miles from Attock, where it is in the rainy season upwards of a mile broad, and never fordable. When the mission under Mr. Elphinstone crossed the river at this very pass, on their return, its present features were found to tally exactly with the description given by the Greek writers. In the battle which ensued, Porus was defeated and taken prisoner. It was in this part of the Hydaspes, on its right, or western bank, that the conqueror, in commemoration of this event, built the cities of Nicæa and Bucephalia.*

After the defeat of Porus, Alexander marched across the doab between the Hydaspes and the Acesines, described as a flat and rich country, through the territories of Porus; passed the latter river, and advanced

* He built a third city on the Acesines.—Arrian, lib. v. c. *ult.*

to the Hydraotes (Ravi), where he captured Sangala, represented to be a strong city of the Cathæi (the modern Cathi), the most valiant and skilful in war of all the Indians. A body of the Cathæi was encamped before the city, which Alexander, having defeated them in a pitched battle, took and razed. Sangala is supposed to have been situated to the south-east of Lahore; and Burnes states, that there are the remains of a city answering to Sangala in the vicinity south-east of that capital. From hence, the conqueror marched to the Hyphasis (Beas), whether above, or as more probable below its junction with the Sutluj, is not quite clear. His historians do not mention the fact [illegible] river, and they allude to a desert beyond the Hyphasis, which exists below the conflux of the two rivers. Here the soldiers received such appalling accounts of the deserts they would have to pass, and of the countless hosts assembled to oppose their progress, that, struck with consternation, and exhausted by fatigue and suffering, they refused to march farther, and Alexan-

der was constrained to give orders for their return.*

Before he commenced his retrograde march, we are told, he raised upon the south-eastern bank of the Hyphasis twelve altars of hewn stone, each seventy-five feet high, to commemorate as many victories, upon which he offered sacrifices: "they were equal in height," says Arrian, "to towers, but far exceeded them in bulk." Curiosity has impelled travellers to make diligent search for some remains of these monuments, but hitherto without success. Apollonius Tyaneus, according to Philostratus, saw these altars in the first century of the Christian era, when a king of Greek race, named Phraotes, was reigning in the Punjab.† Burnes,‡ however, made exten-

* Some traditions of Alexander exist in the Rajpoot state of Bikanir: a ruin near Dandoosir is said to be the remains of the capital of a prince of this region punished by the Macedonian conqueror.—Annals of Rajasthan, vol. ii. p. 186.

† Mr. Prinsep's paper on the expedition of Alexander, in Journ. of As. Soc. of Bengal, No. 126.

‡ Vol. i. p. 7.

sive researches in the country below the union of the two rivers, wandering about for several days, but could find no relic of these colossal altars. Mr. Atkinson thinks they may be found in the vicinity of the British cantonment of Ferozepore.*

This, therefore, was the extreme limit of Alexander's progress eastward. He recrossed successively the Hydraotes, the Acesines, and the Hydaspes, where a large fleet had been prepared for a descent of that river. The boats, 800 in number, were built of timber procured from the mountains, and Burnes says that in none of the other Punjab rivers are such trees (deodar, a kind of cedar) floated down [illegible], nor do there exist such facilities for constructing vessels, as in the Jelum. In November, B.C. 327, Alexander embarked on board one of these vessels, and whilst the fleet, which he commanded in person, dropped down the stream, two divisions of the army marched along the Hydaspes, and a third along the Acesines, to the confluence of these streams, where the fleet was much shattered. The Greek his-

* Expedition into Affghanistan, p. 60.

torians, as well as those of Timur, describe the confluence as accompanied by terrific violence; whereas Burnes, who saw the waters at their height, says that the junction is effected "with a murmuring noise," but the velocity of the current is inconsiderable. The army was now distributed into four divisions, three of which marched at some distance from each other in parallel columns, whilst the fourth, under the king, advanced inland, from the river, to drive the Malli into the other divisions. On arriving at the junction of the Hydraotes with the Acesines, the king had several combats with this tribe, whose capital he took, pursuing them to the other side of the Hydraotes. In these conflicts Alexander exhibited much courage, exposing himself to great personal danger, and was severely wounded with an arrow. Thence he marched into the countries of King Musicanus, King Oxycanus,* the Sindomanni (the Sindians), and other districts on the Lower Indus. Subsequently,

* The termination *canus*, in these names, is probably the title of *Khan*: thus *Musicanus* may be *Musa Khan*.

deputies from the Malli and the Oxydracæ came, with presents, to solicit peace, alleging, by way of excuse for their obstinate resistance to the Greeks, their strong love of liberty.

Descending the Indus, Alexander arrived at Patala (Tatta*), " where the river divides into two great branches." According to Arrian,† *Patala*, in the Indian tongue, signified the same as *Delta* in the Greek. Alexander proceeded down one of the branches (probably the Piti) to the sea, and afterwards returned to Patala, whence, leaving his fleet with Nearchus, he marched with his army to Persia by way of Gedrosia (Mekran) and Caramania (Kerman), in September, B.C. 326.

The [illegible] political state of the country at that period may be discerned even in the loose notices left us. Arrian states, that there was then a family, enjoying supreme dominion in India, which derived their pedigree from Budæus, probably Buddha, whose creed extended widely over this and the neighbouring countries down to the fifth century of our era. The authority of this para-

* Wood prefers the site of Jerk. † *Indic.* 314.

mount Indian sovereign, however, did not reach the Punjab, which was severed into separate kingdoms and principalities. That of Musicanus, we are told, was governed by Bramins, and Burnes conjectures that the powerful kingdom of Alore, or Arore, which extended from the ocean to Cashmere, and from Candahar to Kanouj, ruled by Bramins so late as the seventh century, was the kingdom of Musicanus. The Oxydracæ (probably the Cutchis), and the Malli (no doubt the people of Multan, which is still called Malli-than, 'the place of the Malli'), —who, though generally at variance, combined against Alexander, and brought against him an army of 90,000 men,—seem to have possessed much power in the south-western parts of the Punjab. Besides these nations, the Greek writers mention seven independent states in the country of the Five Rivers.

Alexander had not time to establish any system of government in the vast provinces he conquered in the East; where his authority was acknowledged, it was exercised through military commanders, who, after his

death (323 B.C.), became, in the natural course of things, and by the force of circumstances, supreme. Seleucus, governor of Babylon, not only secured that country, but extended his power, by the destruction of his competitors, as far as the Indus, which he crossed, B. C. 305, to attack Sandracottus (identified with the Chandragupta of Indian history), who had expelled the Greek garrisons from the Punjab, which was thus restored to native rule. Seleucus is said to have passed the Hesudrus (Sutluj), and, after gaining several victories over Sandracottus, being suddenly recalled to defend his own territories, to have concluded a treaty of peace with that monarch, to whom he ceded the Punjab and valley of the Indus as far as Peshawur.*

The discoveries which have been recently made, through the medium of the Arian and Greek (bilingual) inscriptions upon coins of monarchs hitherto unknown to history,

* The expedition of Seleucus to the Punjab is related by Justin (lib. xv. c. 4), and by Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* lib. vi. c. 17).

found in Afghanistan and the Punjab, in conjunction with records of indubitable authority engraven upon rocks in various parts of India, and especially at Kapir-di-Ghari (a village about forty miles from Peshawur, in the country of the Eusofzai Afghans), have diffused a new light upon Græco-Indian and Scytho-Indian history, and enable us partially to fill up a vast chasm in the transactions of the Punjab.*

Antiochus the Great, according to the Greek and Roman historians, invaded India B.C. 206, and formed an alliance with Sophagasenes, the sovereign of that country. It is now ascertained, from the evidence before referred to, that this sovereign was Asoka, or Piyadasi, king of Magadha (grandson of Chandragupta), who ascended the throne B.C. 247. He was a zealous Buddhist, and in one of his edicts still extant, engraved on

* For this unexpected accession of the most authentic and unquestionable evidence the world is indebted to the extraordinary talents, learning, and sagacity of the late Mr. James Prinsep, who fell a victim to his unremitted pursuit of this important study.

stone, he expressly mentions by name Antiochus, the Greek king (*Antiyako Yona Raja*), who, it seems, had favoured, if not adopted, the Buddhistic opinions. Eucratides the Great, another Bactrian king, invaded India B.C. 165, and annexed the Punjab to his dominions. Upon his death, his vast empire is supposed to have been broken into several independent kingdoms, one of which, ruled by Menander and Apollodotus, included the Punjab. A list of kings has been obtained from recently discovered coins, of Greek mintage, bearing Arian inscriptions on the reverse, ranging from 153 to 120 B.C., who are supposed, upon good grounds, to have been sovereigns of the Punjab, the valley of the Indus, and Cabul.

The disruption of the empire of Eucratides enabled Mithridates I. (a Parthian monarch) to seize upon a large part of his territories; and he made a successful invasion of India, about B.C. 140, and there is reason to believe that satraps, or governors, were left by him in possession of the Punjab, where coins of Parthian princes have been found,

the dates of which are placed between the years 90 and 60 B.C.*

Towards the commencement of our era, this part of India appears to have been overrun by successive hordes of Scythians, whom some mighty revolutions in Tartary had expelled from their native seats. The Chinese historians say, that, about a century before our era, the Yuĕ-te (Getes, or Jits), who occupied a vast country between China and the Tëen-shan, or Celestial Mountains, were, after many sanguinary wars, expelled by the Heung-noos, or Huns, and forced into the countries of the Oxus and Jaxartes, whence they extended themselves to Afghanistan and the borders of India. The Indus was only a temporary barrier, and they appear to have occupied the whole country of the Five Rivers. These conclusions, heretofore

* The reader will find an admirable *resumé* of the discoveries of Mr. Jas. Prinsep, and their bearing upon Arian, Indo-Bactrian, and Indian history, elucidated by the learned comments of Prof. Lassen and Prof. Wilson, in Mr. H. T. Prinsep's "Note on the Historical Results deducible from Recent Discoveries in Afghanistan." 1844.

formed from meagre historical evidence, are now confirmed by the discovery of coins of Punjab rulers, whose names, Azes and Azilises, which have no affinity with Greek or Hindu nomenclature, denote a barbarian origin. The great Indian sovereign, Vicramaditya, expelled the Scythian princes from the Punjab, and his era (B.C. 56) is supposed to commence from a great victory obtained by him over the barbarians in that country, which completed his conquest of all Hindustan. His empire, however, fell to pieces after his death, when new hordes of Scythians overran the Punjab, and established, about 20 B.C., a dynasty of kings bearing the name of Kadphises. Coins of these kings have been recovered, and their barbarous effigies clearly distinguish them from Greeks or Hindus. This dynasty is supposed to have reigned throughout the whole of the first century of our era, when it was subverted by a fresh swarm of Scythians, under the Kanerki kings. Between these dynasties, however, there is evidence, from the testimony of Apollonius Tyaneus, related by Philostratus (before referred to), that a Græco-

Parthian king, named Phraotes, reigned in the Punjab, which fact is supported by coins of Undopherres and Gondophares,* both called, in the Arian legends upon the coins, Phrahata.

The power of the Kanerki kings in the Punjab must have continued for some centuries; for in the topes or tumuli which have been opened in that country, Kanerki coins have been found along with those of Kadphises and other predecessors of the race, mixed with coins of the Sassanian monarchs of the third and fourth centuries of our era.†

* The date, as well as name, of this king, Mr. H. T. Prinsep remarks, is confirmed by a tradition regarding St. Thomas, of whom it is said, in the *Aurea Sacra*, that he was appointed by a king of India, named Gondoferus, to build a place of worship.

† These topes, remarkable as monuments of antiquity in the Punjab, and which have furnished the most irrefragable historical evidence, deserve some particular notice here. They are evidently sepulchral monuments, erected for the preservation of the remains of persons of distinction after their bodies had been consumed. They are found not only in the Punjab, but in Bameean and Afghanistan, particularly in the neighbourhood of Cabul. They consist of mounds, on which is erected a cupola, supported by walls of masonry, more or less in a Grecian style of architecture.

Amongst

That these Scythian invaders continued to pour into and occupy the Punjab, is a fact

Amongst the ruins of Manikyala (now the name of a small village on the high road from Attock to Lahore, about half-way between Attock and Jelum), an ancient city, which, from the abundance of coins found there, must have been a place of great importance, probably the capital of the country of Taxiles, is a large tope, eighty feet high, and about 320 feet in circumference. It is solidly built of quarried stones, with lime cement, in a simple style, the only ornament being a range of small columns near the base, having rams' heads for their capitals. Fifteen smaller topes are in the same locality. All these monuments were opened by Generals Ventura and Court, when in the service of Runjeet Singh. The smaller topes were first explored, and in one, which was pierced from the summit by General Court, were found four copper coins, three feet only from the upper surface, one of Kadphises, the others of Kanerkis. Ten feet lower, a rectangular cell was reached, built with dressed stones, firmly united by mortar; in the centre stood a copper urn, round which were placed symmetrically eight medals of copper, much corroded, two being of the Kadphises type, and the rest Kanerkis. The urn was carefully enveloped in a wrapper of white linen, which fell to shreds. In the copper urn was a smaller silver one (the intervening space being filled with a moist earthy paste), quite corroded, so as to break into pieces. Within this urn was a much smaller vessel of gold, embedded in the same brown paste, along with seven genuine silver Roman coins. The gold vessel contained

attested not only by Fă-hëen, a Chinese traveller in India early in the fifth century (who crossed the Five Rivers, and found Buddhism prevalent in that country), but by an inscrip-

four small gold coins of Græco-Scythian type, all Kanerkis, and two precious stones, with four decayed pearls, bored as for ear-rings. The stone, which served as a covering to the niche containing the relics, bore inscriptions; it is now deposited in the royal library at Paris.

In the large tope, which was opened by General Ventura, in 1830, were found six coins, three feet from the surface, another at ten feet, and several at twenty feet. Lower down, the workmen reached a metal case, which was broken by their pickaxes, containing a small box of pure gold, in the centre of which was an opal. The box contained a gold coin, of the Kanerki race, a gold seal-ring, having a Pehlvi inscription, a Sassanian silver coin (supposed to be of Sapor II.), two other Sassanian coins, and a rude silver coin of India. Still lower down, other articles were found, and at fifty-four feet, three more Sassanian coins, all much corroded. At sixty-four feet, a chamber was opened, which contained a copper box, filled with a brown liquid, containing decomposed animal substance. Inside was a turned brass box, with an Arian inscription on the lid, in which were five copper coins of the Kanerki and Kenorano type, a gold cylinder, containing fragments of amber, a small gold coin of the Kanerki Koranos type, a disk of silver with Arian characters, and other articles.

tion discovered by Colonel Tod in a temple near Kotah, in Rajpootana, dated A. D. 409, which contains a memorial of a Jit prince of Salpoora, at the base of the Sewalik mountains. Colonel Tod considers it to be proved beyond a doubt, "that these Jit princes of Salpoora, in the Punjab, were the leaders of that very colony of the Yuti from the Jaxartes, who, in the fifth century, as recorded by De Guignes, crossed the Indus and possessed themselves of the Punjab."* Various indications appear in the Rajpoot annals of their conquests and settlements in this country, even as far as the Jelum.

The Mahomedan invasions of India commenced in the seventh century of our era, and the first storms broke upon the country east of the Indus. The date of A. D. 685 is fixed by Colonel Tod, from native records, as that of the earliest invasion of Rajpootana by the Moslems. In the reign of Walid (A. D. 705 to 715), Sinde was invaded, and that caliph is said to have rendered all India to the Ganges tributary to him. In A. D. 718, Mahomed-bin-Kasim, the general of

* Annals of Rajasthan, vol. i. p. 796.

Omar, vanquished and slew the prince of Sinde, and conquered that country. The great kingdom of Arore was occupied by the Caliph Al-Mansoor (A. D. 754 to 775), who changed the name of its capital to Mansoora. The celebrated Harun-al-Rashid (A. D. 786 to 809), in apportioning his immense empire amongst his sons, included in the share given to Al-Mamoon, the second son, Sinde and Hindustan. In 833, this prince, then caliph, entered Western India from Zabulisthan, but the Mahomedans do not appear to have obtained a footing in the country till nearly two centuries later, and in 850 Sinde was the only province of India left to Motawakel, the grandson of Harun.

After Subektegin, the governor of Khorasan, had declared himself independent at Ghuzni, in A.D. 975, he carried his arms across the Indus, forcibly converting the natives to Islamism. These inroads were repeated, and in the last (A.D. 997), he was accompanied by his son, the celebrated Mahmud, who became, upon his succession to the throne of Ghuzni, the scourge of India. Twelve several invasions of that country by

him are recorded, in which the bigotry and rapacity of the Mahomedans left durable traces of their inroads, in the sack and destruction of cities, the desecration and plunder of temples, and the slaughter or impoverishment of the people.

The notices which the Musulman historians give of the political condition of the Punjab shew that it was still divided into separate states. We find that the Sindsagur doab, between the Indus and the Jelum, was the seat of a kingdom founded by the Keechi tribe of Rajpoots, the northern Chohans, whose ruler was expelled by Mahomed-bin-Kasim. The Jit [illegible] king of Salpoora, in the Punjab, was driven across the Sutlej by a Musulman leader named Ferid, and a kingdom of Lahore is frequently mentioned by Ferishta, of which the city so named was the capital, and which extended to Multan.

The analogy between the condition of India at this period and at the date of the Macedonian invasion is still farther supported by the fact that, in the seventh century, the Pramara family held paramount sovereignty

over the Hindu nation, reigning sometimes at Oojein, sometimes at Cheetore.

The first invasion of Mahmud, A.D. 1,000, extended eastward as far as the Bari doab, and alarmed the king of Lahore, named Jeipal, a Bramin, who had formed an alliance with some of the Afghan tribes beyond the Indus, whither the arms of the Lahore prince had penetrated. His authority, according to Ferishta, was not much inferior to that of the late Runjeet Singh, for he is said to have ruled from Sirhind to Limgham, and from Cashmere to Multan. Various conflicts took place between this powerful prince and the Mahomedans; in the end, the latter were successful, and Jeipal was made a tributary to the Sultan. The next invasions took place in 1004 and 1005, when the king of Multan revolted, and was joined by the king of Lahore. The latter was conquered, and fled to Cashmere. In a subsequent year, Mahmud again expelled the king of Lahore from his dominions and overran Cashmere. From this country, in 1018, he burst with a large army upon Upper India, and took Canouj, Muttra, and Agra. In his later ex-

peditions he captured the city of Lahore, which he gave up to pillage, and after having destroyed the celebrated temple of Somnat, in Guzerat, his last exploit was the punishment of the Jits or Jats of Multan, who made a desperate resistance, not only on land, but with a fleet of boats upon the Indus.

The son and successor of Mahmud maintained such a degree of authority as could be exercised over a remote territory, in the Punjab; but the Turks, under the Seljuk princes, gradually curtailed the power of the Ghaznivide Sultans, who, in 1049, possessed only Afghanistan and some provinces of India beyond the Jelum. In this state of things, the princes of the Punjab endeavoured to recover their independence; but Ibrahim, a vigorous prince, making a cession to the Seljukians of the territories they had taken from his family, directed his whole attention to India, and in 1080, reduced many parts; and his successor, Musaud, made Lahore the principal seat of his government. A subsequent sultan of this dynasty, Khosru, withdrew entirely from his Afghan territory,

now usurped by the Gaurian princes, and made Lahore the capital of his Indian possessions. Under his successor, the Gaurian prince Mahomed invaded India, overran Multan and the provinces on both sides the Indus, penetrating as far as Lahore, overthrew the Ghaznevide dynasty reigning there, and, in 1184, substituted his own.

Mahomed of Gaur, or Ghor, leaving the government of his Indian provinces to a viceroy, returned to his capital of Ghuzni; but his absence gave the princes of India an opportunity to form a powerful combination against his authority, and when, in 1190, he returned with a formidable army of Turks, Persians, and Afghans, he encountered a force consisting of 300,000 horse, and a great body of infantry, headed by no less than 150 rajas, in Ajmer. This unwieldy army was overthrown by the Moslems. Mahomed left his general, Kutb-ud-deen, to complete the conquest of India, and in 1192, Delhi, Benares, and the whole country to the confines of Bengal, submitted to him. Kutb was declared governor of India, and he established the authority of his master in the

south-western provinces. In an insurrection of the Ghikers, or Gakkars, a tribe of Hindus, who attempted to recover their independence, and actually marched towards Lahore, Mahomed was murdered in his tent. As he left no family, Kutb became sovereign of India, and added Bengal and Bahar to his dominions. Upon his death, in 1210, his ill-compacted empire fell to pieces, but the fragments were re-united by Shams-ud-deen Altumsh, who extended his authority from the Ganges to the Indus.

An event now happened which changed the whole face of Asia. Chengiz Khan, at the head of his hordes of Monguls, after overrunning and desolating the great Mahomedan empires of Central Asia, in 1221, approached the Indus. In 1240, they made an incursion into India, and plundered the country as far as Lahore, retreating to Ghuzni. In this inroad, they were assisted by the Ghikers, or Gakkars. A few years later, the Monguls, having subjected the countries west of the Indus, attempted the conquest of India. The Punjab, however, was successfully defended. Bulbun, the

vizir of Sultan Nasir-ud-deen, formed these frontier provinces into one great government, at the head of which he placed his relative, Sher Khan, as viceroy, who not only kept the Monguls out of the Punjab, but invaded their territory, and took Ghuzni. Repeated efforts were made by these Tartars upon the country in the reigns of Sultan Bulbun (or Balin) and his successors; but they were repelled.* In 1302, the Mongul sovereign of Transoxiana invaded the Punjab with 100,000 men, and a battle was fought in the neighbourhood of Lahore, in which the invaders were defeated by the forces of Alla-ud-deen, and compelled to retreat. The vice-royalty of Lahore seems, at this period, to have been a post of great power, and Ghazi-ben-Toghluk (whose mother was a Jat), who held it in 1321, marched to Delhi, subverted the Khilji dynasty of India, and seized upon the throne. In the subsequent reign of his son, Mahomed (who extended the Mahomedan empire in India to its widest limits), an army of Monguls hav-

* Eleven of these invasions are mentioned by Ferishta.—Elphinstone's Hist. of India, vol. ii. p. 37.

ing entered the country of the Five Rivers, the sultan bought them off by an immense contribution, the first instance in India of this delusive and dangerous policy. The extravagant projects of this prince threw his empire into confusion, and prepared its dismemberment; the governors of the provinces, beginning with that of Multan, rebelled; in 1339, the Afghans crossed the Indus, and ravaged the Punjab; when they retired, they were succeeded by the fierce Gakkars, under a leader, who took Lahore, and completed the ruin of the province.

Whilst the Mahomedan empire of India was thus rent asunder, and almost in a state of dissolution, its great provinces having become independent kingdoms, another mighty conqueror was preparing to lead his victorious bands across the Indus. Timur (or Tamerlane), having conquered Persia, Transoxiana, and Mesopotamia, turned his arms, without the pretext of a quarrel, upon the distracted empire of Hindustan. In August, 1397, he proceeded from Cabul to Dinkot (supposed to be Attock), crossed the Indus on a bridge of rafts, marched to the Jelum,

and down its banks to Toolumba, reducing the country, levying contributions, and massacreing the inhabitants. On the Ghara he was joined by his son, Pir Mahomed, who had taken Multan the preceding year, and marking his progress with fire and sword, he advanced to Delhi. The disorganized state of the provinces, and the weakness of the sovereign, permitted no effectual resistance to be offered to Timur, who was proclaimed emperor of India. Three months after, he quitted the country, marching from Hurdwar, on the Ganges, along the foot of the mountains, to Jummoo, north of Lahore; then, turning to the south, he fell into the route by which he had advanced.

After the departure of the Tartars, the empire became a prey to anarchy. The governors of provinces, or subahdars, renounced their dependence, and assumed royal titles. Lahore, the Punjab, and Multan, were seized by Khizr Khan, a Syud, who had been governor of Multan, but was expelled during the confusion that preceded the invasion of Timur. Khizr appealed to that conqueror, who gave him the govern-

ment of the whole Punjab. Having now declared his independence, he, on the death of Shah Mahmud, in 1414, seized upon the throne of Delhi, affecting to recognize Timur as emperor of India, and to govern as his deputy. The Punjab became thus reunited to the empire; but before long, the eastern portion, under Bheilol Khan Lodi, an Afghan, the governor of Sirhind, who made himself master of Lahore, and of the greater part of the Punjab, revolted, whilst the Gakkars continued to molest the whole country of the Five Rivers. Under Mobarik, the son and successor of Khizr, there was a constant struggle in the Punjab to reduce the eastern part to obedience, and to prevent the Gakkars from gaining possession of the other portion. Mahomed, Mobarik's successor, employed Bheilol, the king of Lahore, to expel the Gakkars, under Jisserit, from the northern part of the Punjab; but the king craftily made his own terms with the Gakkars, and his territory is stated by Ferishta to have included the whole of the Punjab, Debalpur, Sirhind, and as far as Paniput. In 1450, he obtained possession

of Delhi, and, on the abdication of Ala-ud-Deen, assumed the sovereignty, founding the dynasty of Lodi.

The accession of Bheilol to the imperial throne re-annexed the Punjab to the empire (though Multan still preserved its independence), and that great province was placed under a viceroy, Ali Khan, an Afghan, whose successor, Doulut Khan, in the reign of Ibrahim Lodi, revolted. As the history of this personage is connected with that of the founder of the Sikh sect, it may be proper to give a less brief notice of his career than can be permitted in this summary of the political history of other chiefs who, in these troubled times, rose and fell in the Punjab country.

Doulut Khan Lodi was of an Afghan or Patan family, related to the imperial house of Delhi. His father, Tatar Khan, was rewarded with the possession of Sirhind and all the country north of the Sutluj, yielding a revenue (according to the emperor Baber) of upwards of three crores, which Mr. Erskine estimates at 150,000*l*. The Punjab westward of the Chenab was at this time governed by Syud

Ali Khan, in the name of Bheilol; but he resigned the governorship to Doulut Khan, then Hakim or Soubahdar of Lahore, who placed his eldest son, Ali Khan, over Behreh, situated apparently in the Sind-sagur doab. When Ibrahim Lodi began by his arrogance and cruelty to excite distrust and disaffection amongst the Afghan chiefs of India, whose ancestors had placed his family on the throne, Doulut Khan, dreading the fate of many who had been assassinated or imprisoned, revolted, and determined to call in the aid of the celebrated Baber, the accomplished king of Ferghana, who had previously invaded the Punjab,* which he claimed as part of his inheritance from Timur, his ancestor. He tells us, in his Memoirs, that "he regarded the Punjab as his own domain, and had been determined to obtain possession of it, either in peace or by war."

In 1519, being intent upon the conquest of India, Baber had crossed the Indus at Attock, the infantry being floated over on rafts,

* According to his own Memoirs, Baber crossed the Indus, in one of his raids, as early as the year 1505.

levied contributions in Behreh, and, appointing a governor of the country he had subjected, returned to Cabul. Prior to this incursion, he had endeavoured to open a communication with Doulut Khan; but Baber's envoy was not allowed to see him, and was detained some months at Lahore. "The Afghans of India," says the emperor in his Memoirs, "are a foolish and senseless race; they can neither remain in a state of amity, nor manfully persevere in war." In 1524, at the express invitation of Doulut Khan, he again crossed the Indus, marched through the country of the Gakkars, whom he subjected, and entered the territory of Lahore. Doulut Khan, however, had been meanwhile expelled by some Afghan chiefs in this quarter, who opposed Baber in the vicinity of the city of Lahore; but they were totally defeated; the city was sacked and reduced to ashes by the victors: Debalpur was taken by assault, and the garrison put to the sword. Baber was now joined by Doulut Khan, who, finding that the king was intent upon his own views, endeavoured to betray him. Baber discovered his treachery, and threw him

and his son Ghazi Khan into prison; but soon after he released them, and bestowed Sultanpur and its dependencies upon Doulut Khan. He, however, again revolted and fled to the eastern hills, and his possessions were given by Baber to Dilawur Khan, one of Doulut's sons, who had remained faithful to him. Upon Baber's return to Cabul, Doulut Khan overran the Punjab; but in 1525, Baber recrossed the Indus, and on the left bank of the Beas, blockaded Doulut Khan in the fort of Milwat. "He proposed to surrender the place," the king says in his Memoirs, "if I would forgive his offences. To expose his rudeness, I required that he should come out with the same two swords about his neck which he had hung by his side to meet me in battle. After making some frivolous pretexts for delay, he was at length brought to me, and I ordered the two swords to be taken from his neck. When he came into the presence he seemed reluctant to bow, and I directed the men to push his leg and make him bow. Then he was placed by my side, and I thus addressed him: 'I called you Father; I shewed you more reverence than

you expected. I delivered you and your sons from the insolence of the Baluches. I rescued your tribe, your family, and women from subjection to Ibrahim. I bestowed upon you the countries held by Tatar Khan, your father, to the amount of three crores of revenue (150,000*l*.). What evil have I ever done, that you should come in this style against me, with two swords?' He was stupified, and stammered out a few words quite beside the purpose. It was settled that he and his family should retain their authority only over their own tribe, and give up all their property except their villages. Doulut Khan soon after died at Sultanpur."

After the surrender of the fort, Baber marched to Roopur, on the Sutlej, and from thence direct upon Delhi, of which, as well as Agra, he took possession in 1526, and was "the founder of a line of kings under whom India rose to the highest pitch of prosperity, and out of the ruins of whose empire all the existing states in that country are composed."*

* Elphinstone's Hist. of India, vol. ii. p. 92.

CHAPTER IV.

RISE OF THE SIKH SECT.

WHILST the Punjab was, during the sixteenth century, a scene of endless contentions for power amongst foreign races, a religious sect, humble in its origin, unpretending in its primitive character, silently arose amidst the tumult of arms, and in spite of persecution, laid the foundations of a great state, which might have exerted a permanent influence upon the political destinies of India.

Nanuk, a Hindu of the Cshatriya caste and Vidi tribe, was born A. D. 1469, at the small village of Talwandi (since become a town, and now called Rayapur), on the banks of the Beas, in the district of Bhatti and province of Lahore. His father, whose name was Calu, had one son, Nanuk, and one daughter, Nanaci, who married a Hindu named Jayram, employed as a grain-factor

by Doulut Khan Lodi, afterwards governor of the Punjab.

Nanuk is represented to have been from his childhood inclined to devotion, and indifferent to worldly concerns. His father endeavoured to divert his mind from this religious tendency, and amongst other expedients, gave him money to purchase salt at one village to sell it at another, for profit. Nanuk undertook the commission, and accompanied by a servant, named Bala, of the tribe of Sandhu, proceeded towards the village where he was to buy the salt. On the road he fell in with some Fakirs (holy mendicants), who were suffering from want of food, which they had not tasted for three days. Nanuk, affected by their condition, observed to Bala, "The gain of this world is transient; I wish to relieve these poor men, and thus obtain that gain which is eternal." His companion (who became afterwards the favourite disciple of Nanuk) commended his proposal, and the money given to purchase the salt was distributed by Nanuk amongst the starving Fakirs, who, when refreshed, entered into a long discourse upon the unity

of God, with which the young Hindu was much delighted.

Upon his return home, his father inquired what profit he had made. "I have fed the poor," replied Nanuk, "and have thereby secured for you a gain that will endure for ever." Calu, provoked at this thoughtless prodigality, abused Nanuk, and even struck him. Ray Bolar, the ruler of the district, overheard this transaction, and, severely reproving Calu for his treatment of his son, interdicted him from ever lifting his hand against Nanuk, before whom, to the astonishment of all present, he humbled himself with profound veneration. This conduct on the part of Ray Bolar was the result of a remarkable occurrence related by Sikh writers.

When Nanuk was a youth, and employed to tend cattle in the fields, he fell asleep under a tree; but as the sun declined, its rays fell upon his face, whereupon a large black snake raised itself from the ground, and interposed its extended hood to protect Nanuk from the sun. Ray Bolar happened to pass the spot, and witnessed this une-

quivocal sign, as he believed, of Nanuk's sanctity and future eminence.

Calu, though obliged to treat his son with more forbearance, still hoped to detach him from his unprofitable abstractions, and in order to plunge him in worldly occupations, prevailed upon Jayram to admit his brother-in-law into partnership with him. Nanuk accordingly attended the granary of Doulut Khan, at Sultanpur; but though employed in business, his thoughts were ever engaged in devotional subjects, and fixed upon the Deity. One morning, whilst he sat in a contemplative posture, a Mahomedan Fakir approached him and exclaimed, "Oh Nanuk, quit these occupations and obtain eternal wealth." Starting up, after a pause, he distributed the contents of the granary amongst the poor, renounced all worldly occupations, and remained for three days in a pool of water, in a kind of trance, during which he is supposed to have had communication with the Prophet Khiz, as the Mahomedans call Elias.

Doulut Khan, hearing that his granary had been emptied, ordered Jayram to be

cast into prison for theft; but Nanuk, when he heard of this event, proceeded to the Khan, avowed the act, and offered to be responsible for all that was deficient in the granary. Jayram's accounts were accordingly examined, when a balance was found in his favour.

From this period, Nanuk began to practise the austerities of a holy man, and by his abstractions in the contemplation of the Divine Being, his abstinence and virtue, he acquired great celebrity. He is said to have travelled into various countries,—to the different places of Hindu pilgrimage, and to Mecca,—in order to reform the worship of the true God, which he perceived was degraded by the idolatry of the Hindus and the ignorance of the Mahomedans. He was accompanied in his travels by Bala Sandhu, his disciple, from whom tradition has preserved various narratives of extravagant or miraculous occurrences. Wherever he journeyed, he preached and explained to all ranks the doctrines of the unity and omnipresence of God, defending his own opinions without offending those of others; always professing

himself an enemy of discord, whose sole object was to reconcile the two faiths of the Hindus and Mahomedans, by recalling them to that great original truth, the basis of both their creeds, the unity of God.

During his travels, in the year 1526, Nanuk was introduced to the Emperor Baber, before whom he maintained his doctrine with firmness and eloquence. Baber is said to have been pleased with the interview, and to have offered him an ample maintenance, which Nanuk refused, observing, that he trusted for support to Him who provided for all, and from whom alone a man of religion and virtue should accept favour or reward.

When Nanuk returned from his travels he cast off the garments of a Fakir, but he continued to give instructions to his now numerous disciples. He appears at this time to have experienced violent opposition from the Hindu zealots, who charged his doctrine with impiety, and when he visited Vatala, the Yogiswaras (recluses, who, by means of corporeal mortifications, are supposed to acquire a command over the powers of nature)

were so enraged, that they strove, though vainly, to terrify him by their feats in enchantment, assuming (says one author) the shapes of tigers and serpents. When Nanuk was asked to exhibit some proof of his supernatural powers, he replied: "A holy teacher has no defence but the purity of his doctrine; the world may change, but the Creator is unchangeable."

Nanuk is said to have proceeded to Multan, where he communed with the Pirs, or Mahomedan saints, of that country. Thence he went to Kirtipur, on the Ravi, where he died,* and was buried near the bank of the river, which has since overflowed his tomb. Kirtipur continues to be a place of religious resort to his followers, and a small piece of Nanuk's garment is exhibited to pilgrims, as a sacred relic, at his dharmsala, or temple.

Nanuk is generally termed by Mahomedan historians, Nanuk Shah, to denote his having been a Fakir. The Sikhs call him Baba Nanuk, 'Father Nanuk,' or Guru Nanuk, 'Nanuk the Teacher;' and their writers term him, Nanuk Nirikar, which means,

* His family still reside in this place.

'Nanuk the Omnipresent.' His character is fairly drawn by Sir John Malcolm: "The great eminence he attained, and the success with which he combated the opposition he met with, afford ample reason to conclude that he was a man of more than common genius; and this favourable impression of his character will be confirmed by a consideration of the object of his life, and the means he took to accomplish it. Born in a province on the extreme verge of India, at the very point where the religion of Muhammed and the idolatrous worship of the Hindus appeared to touch, and at a moment when both these tribes cherished the most violent rancour and animosity towards each other, his great aim was to blend these jarring elements in peaceful union, and he only endeavoured to effect his purpose through the means of mild persuasion. His wish was to recal both Muhammedans and Hindus to an exclusive attention to that sublimest of all principles, which inculcates devotion to God and peace towards man. He had to combat the furious bigotry of the one, and the deep-rooted superstition of the

other; but he attempted to overcome all obstacles by the force of reason and humanity; and we cannot have a more convincing proof of the general character of that doctrine which he taught, and the inoffensive light in which it was viewed, than the knowledge that its success did not rouse the bigotry of the intolerant and tyrannical Muhammedan government under which he lived."*

Nanuk was indebted for his religious notions to the doctrines of the Kabir Pantis, or followers of Kabir,† one of the twelve disciples of the Hindu schismatic, Ramanand. Kabir assailed the whole system of idolatrous worship, ridiculed the learning of the pundits and doctrines of the Sastras, in a style peculiarly suited to the genius of his countrymen, whilst he also directed his compositions to the Musulman, as well as to the Hindu faith, and with equal severity attacked the

* Sketch of the Sikhs.—As. Res. vol. xi. p. 207.

† Professor Wilson doubts whether such a person as Kabir ever existed, and whether his name (which signifies 'greatest') was not used as a mere cover to the innovations of some freethinker amongst the Hindus.—As. Res. vol. xvi. p. 53.

mullah and the *Koran*. The effect of his lessons, indirectly as well as directly, has been great, and Mr. Wilson has shewn, that several of the popular sects in India are little more than ramifications from his stock. The Kabir Pantis admit of but one God, the creator of the world;* and Nanuk taught that devotion was due but to one God; that forms were immaterial, and like the Bramin (probably a disciple of Kabir) who maintained before Secander Lodi, that all religions, if sincerely practised, were equally acceptable to God,—for which he was put to death by that prince,—he held that Hindu and Mahomedan modes of worship were the same in the sight of the Deity.

The followers of Nanuk had now augmented in numbers (amounting, it is said, to 100,000) and become a distinct sect. Their present denomination is derived from the Sanscrit word *sicsha*, which is a general term, meaning a disciple, or devoted follower, and has been corrupted in the Punjabi dialect into *Sikh*. He was married at

* The tenets of the Kabir Pantis are minutely developed by Professor Wilson, *ut ante*.

an early age, and had two sons, named Srichand and Lacshmi Das. The former, who abandoned the world, had a son named Dherm Chand, who founded the sect of Udasi, and his descendants are still known as Nanukputra, 'children of Nanuk.' Lacshmi Das plunged into worldly pleasures, and left neither heirs nor reputation. Nanuk did not deem either of his sons worthy to succeed to his spiritual office, which he bequeathed to a Cshatriya, of the Trehun tribe, named Lehana (born at Khandur, on the bank of the Beas, forty miles east of Lahore), whom he had initiated in the sacred mysteries of his sect, clothed in the holy mantle of a Fakir, and endowed with the name or title of Angad.

The life of Guru Angad was not distinguished by any remarkable action. He taught the same doctrine as Nanuk, and wrote some chapters of the Sikh scriptures now called *Grant'h*, the first part of which includes the *Pran Sankali*, composed by Nanuk himself for the instruction of his followers. Angad had two sons, who were not initiated, and at his death, in 1552, he

was succeeded by Amera Das, a Cshatriya of the Bhale tribe, who had performed the office of a menial to Angad for twelve years, fetching water daily from the Beas, six miles off, to wash his master's feet.

Amera Das was distinguished by his activity in preaching the tenets of Nanuk, and he made many converts, by the aid of whom he established some temporal power, and built Kujarawal. A separation now took place between the followers of Amera Das and the Udasis, the sect of Dherm Chand. Amera Das had a son, Mohan, and a daughter, Mohani, or Bhaini; he was very anxious regarding the marriage of the latter, and employed a Bramin to seek a fit husband for her; but Amera's attention having been accidentally drawn to a youth named Ram Das, a Cshatriya of a respectable family of the Sondi tribe, he gave him his daughter in marriage. Amera Das died in 1574, and was succeeded by this son-in-law, whom he had initiated in the sacred mysteries of the sect.

Ram Das became celebrated for his piety, and for the improvements he made at Amritsur, an ancient city, then called Chak,

which for some time had the name of Rampur, or Ramdaspur,* after him. He built a tank of water, which he termed Amritsur, signifying 'water of immortality;' this tank has acquired a sacred character, and has imparted its holiness to the city.

Ram Das passed a quiet life, employing it chiefly in the composition of works explanatory of the Sikh tenets, and died at Amritsur in 1581, leaving two sons, Arjunmal and Bharatmal, the former of whom succeeded him, and has rendered himself illustrious by compiling the *Adi Grant'h*, or First Sacred Volume of the Sikhs.† This work originally received its present form and arrangement from Arjun, who enlarged and improved, by additions of his own, the most valuable writings of Nanuk and his immediate successors, Angad, Amera Das and Ram Das.‡ Arjun, therefore, is to be

* *Pur*, or *pura*, signifies 'town.'

† *Grant'h*, means 'book;' *Adi Grant'h*, 'First Book,' is a name given to this volume to distinguish it from the *Dasama Padshah-ka-Grant'h*, or 'Book of the Tenth King,' composed by Guru Govind.

‡ Some small portions have been since added by thirteen persons, who are reckoned as only twelve and a half, the last contributor being a female.

deemed the first who gave a consistent form to the religion of the Sikhs, which, though it united the sect and increased its numbers, provoked the jealousy of the Mahomedans, to which Arjun fell a sacrifice. "The spirit of the Sikh religion," observes Mr. Elphinstone,* "promised to keep its votaries at peace with all mankind; but such views of comprehensive charity were particularly odious to the bigoted part of the Mahomedans." In order to trace the causes of the persecution of the new sect, it is necessary to take a glance at the state of the Punjab subsequent to the invasion of Baber.

That conqueror left his son Humayun in possession of the throne of Delhi, which he was soon called to defend against his own family. Kamran, Baber's second son, who had the government of Cabul and Candahar, determined to seize upon the Punjab, and Humayun thought it prudent to yield with a good grace what he would have found it difficult to retain by force, and conferred upon his brother the government of the country of the Five Rivers, as far as the

* Hist. of India, vol. ii. p. 562.

Indus, and northward from that river to Persia, on condition that he held this territory as a dependency. Humayun was a few years later attacked and defeated by Sher Khan, the governor of Bahar, and fled to his brother Kamran, at Lahore; but this prince was glad to make peace with the victor, by ceding to him the Punjab, retiring to his government of Cabul. The Doabs were for some time a place of refuge for Humayun, who appears to have experienced much suffering, and his son, the illustrious Akbar, was born during this period, in the fortress of Amerkot, October 14th, 1542. The emperor was eventually compelled to retire to Candahar, and afterwards to Persia, leaving Sher Shah in possession of the throne of India, whose sons contended for the empire, the Punjab being the scene of the conflict. The Sur family continued long in a state of mutual hostilities, and in 1554, Secander Sur, nephew of Sher Shah, proclaimed himself king in the Punjab. In the midst of these rebellions, Humayun re-crossed the Indus from Cabul; the governors in the Punjab fled before him: he

continued his progress towards the Sutluj, occupied Lahore, and recovered his throne, with a small portion, however, of his former dominions.* His son, the celebrated Akbar, was employed to reduce the Punjab, which, with much difficulty, he wrested from Secander Sur. Upon the death of his father, in 1555, Akbar's territory as Shah was confined to the Punjab and the country around Delhi and Agra. The provinces within the Five Rivers were soon the theatre of a fierce contest, brought on by the attempt of prince Hakim to wrest it from his brother, in which he failed, and was driven across the Indus, upon which occasion Akbar built the fort of Attock. The Punjab was now securely annexed to the imperial territory, and the prince made that country his residence for fourteen years, usually dwelling at Lahore.

The reign of Akbar was favourable to the progress of the new sect. His religious opinions were of the most liberal kind. His own creed was a pure deism. He maintained that we ought to reverence God

* Stewart's Tezkereh al Vakiat.

according to the knowledge of him derived from our own reason, by which his unity and benevolence are sufficiently established. "He seems," says Mr. Elphinstone,* "to have been by nature devout, and to have inclined even to superstitions that promised him a closer connection with the Deity than was afforded by the religion which his reason approved." The views of Akbar approximate to those of the Kabir Pantis.

The accession of Jehangir restored the forms and tenets of the Mahomedan faith, which had been discouraged by his father, and with them the spirit of persecution. In the year 1606, a Hindu zealot, named Danichand, whose writings Arjunmal had refused to admit into the *Adi-Grant'h,* because the notions they inculcated were irreconcilable with the pure doctrine of the unity and omnipotence of God, had sufficient influence with the Mahomedan governor of the province, to procure the imprisonment of Arjun, who is said to have been put to death in a cruel manner. The martyrdom of their pontiff converted the Sikhs, hitherto an inoffen-

* Hist. of India, vol. ii. p. 323.

sive sect of quietists, into a band of fanatical warriors; they took arms under Har Govind, the son of Arjunmal, and wreaked their vengeance upon all whom they believed to have been concerned in the atrocious deed.

At this moment, Prince Khosru, the emperor's eldest son, had raised the standard of revolt against his father, in that part of the Punjab where the Sikhs were located, chiefly in the neighbourhood of Lahore. The contest carried on by Har Govind against the Mahomedans seems to have led to no event of sufficient importance to be noticed by cotemporary writers; but it appears to have been his desire to imbue his party with an irreconcilable hatred, and a desperate spirit of hostility, towards the Mahomedans. It is stated, that he wore two swords in his girdle, and when asked the reason, replied, "One is to revenge the death of my father; the other to destroy the miracles of Mahomed."

Har Govind is reported to have been the first who allowed his followers to eat flesh of all animals, except the cow. Nanuk had

interdicted swine's flesh, to flatter the Mahomedans. Har Govind had five sons, Babu Gurudaitya, Saurat Singh, Tegh Bahadur, Anna Ray, and Atal Ray. The second and third were forced, by the persecutions of the Mahomedans, to fly into the mountains north of the Punjab. The eldest died early, leaving two sons, Daharmal, and Har Ray, the latter of whom succeeded Har Govind, who died in 1644. His rule was tranquil; but upon his death, in 1661, a violent contest arose amongst the Sikhs, regarding the succession to the office of their spiritual leader, and the question was referred to the arbitration of the emperor, who, by an imperial decree, allowed the Sikhs to elect their own priest. They chose Har Crishin, who died in 1664, and was succeeded by his uncle, Tegh Bahadur. He had, however, to encounter a most violent opposition from his nephew, Ram Ray, who remained at Delhi, and endeavoured, by art and intrigue, to effect his ruin. Tegh Bahadur was cast into prison, afterwards released, and took up his abode at Patna, where a Sikh college was founded; but in the end he fell a sacri-

fice to his nephew's rancour, or, as some say, to his own depredations in the Punjab, and he was publicly executed in 1675.

From the time of Har Govind, the Sikhs had made no progress, and their records are unsatisfactory. They seem to have suffered in their first attempt to attain political power, by the vigorous rule of the Mogul government, then, under Aurungzeb, in the zenith of its strength, and by their own dissensions. After the death of Tegh Bahadur, their history assumes a new aspect. It is no longer the record of sectaries desirous of protecting themselves, not of injuring others, but that of a nation, actuated by a deep sense of the injuries they had received from a bigoted and tyrannical government, who listened, with all the ardour of men commencing a career of military glory, to the call of a son, glowing with a desire of vengeance against the murderers of his father, and inviting them to lay aside their peaceful habits, and engraft the courage of the soldier upon the enthusiasm of the devotee.

Guru Govind, the son of Tegh Bahadur, though very young at his father's death, che-

rished a sentiment of implacable resentment against those who had caused it. Being acknowledged by the Sikhs as their Sat-guru, or spiritual leader, he first conceived the idea of forming the Sikhs into a religious and military commonwealth, and "executed his design," as Mr. Elphinstone observes, "with the systematic spirit of a Grecian lawgiver." He succeeded in effecting a complete change in their habits, character, and creed. Hitherto they had resorted to arms only in self-defence, which is sanctioned by the institutions of the Hindus; but Guru Govind broke through a rule which limited his own ambition as well as the growth of the sect; he perceived that the only effectual means of resisting the Mahomedan government were to admit converts from all tribes, to arm the whole population, and to make worldly wealth and eminence objects to which Hindus of every rank might aspire. The latent aim of Nanuk was to abolish the distinctions of caste amongst the Hindus; and Guru Govind, who resolved to make this equality a fundamental principle of the sect, is reported to have said that the four castes of Hindus

would, like *pan* (betel leaf), *chunam* (lime), *supari* (areca-nut), and *khat* (catechu),—the constituents of the masticatory given customarily to visitors—become of one colour when well chewed. It was his policy, therefore, to place all who subscribed to the Sikh doctrine, as far as possible, upon a level, whether Bramin or Sudra, and to make their advancement solely dependent upon their own exertions. He admitted all nations and all creeds, Mahomedans and Hindus; and well aware how essential it was that men of low birth, nursed in the slavish notions of submission and subserviency, should be taught a sentiment of self-respect, he gave to all his followers the honourable epithet of *Singh*, or 'lion,' hitherto confined to the proud Rajpoots, belonging to the high military caste of Hindus, with whom every Sikh now felt himself on a footing of equality. His followers, to whom he gave the name of Khalsa Singh, were required to dedicate themselves, from birth or initiation, to arms; always to have *steel* about them; to wear a blue dress; to allow their hair to grow; to salute each other with the phrases "*Wah! Guruji ka*

Khalsa!"* or "*Wah! Guruji ki Fateh!*" which means, 'success to the state of the Guru!' and 'victory attend the Guru!' These exclamations became, as they were intended to be, watchwords, which kept alive in the minds of the Sikhs their religious faith and the civil obligations they owed to their leader. The rules with respect to dress and appearance (for which various reasons are assigned by Sikh writers) were evidently designed to distinguish this sect from all other classes in India, and give them a kind of national character. The blue garb is still worn by the Akalis, or devotees of the sect.

Guru Govind propagated and enforced his tenets by preaching, by acts, and by writing. The *Dasama Padshah ka Grant'h*, or 'Book of the Tenth King,'—Guru Govind being the tenth leader from Nanuk,—is his work, which is not limited to religious subjects, but includes narratives, written in a glowing and even hyperbolical style, of his battles,

* *Khalsa*, 'select,' is a term equivalent to 'commonwealth,' or 'state;' but is supposed by the Sikhs to have a mystical meaning, and to imply the theocracy under which they live.

composed with a view of infusing a spirit of valour and emulation into his followers. It is as much revered amongst the Sikhs as the *Adi-Granth*. He instituted the Guru Mata, or State Council, which met at Amritsur, and by admitting the Sikhs to a personal share in the government, gave to their political institutions the form of a federative republic. The history of Govind, therefore, is intimately interwoven with that of the Sikh sect.

He was born at Patna, and brought up at Madradesa, in the Punjab. After his father's death, he addicted himself to hunting and other manly exercises; but he gave offence to the Emperor of Delhi, who ordered the Mahomedan governors to attack him. In the first action, according to his own evidence, the arrows of the Sikhs triumphed over the sabres of the Mahomedans, "through the favour of the Most High," and two principal chiefs of the imperial army, Hyat Khan and Nejabet Khan, fell.

His first success greatly increased the number of his followers, who were established at Anandpur, Khilore, and other

towns. He next leagued with Bhima Chand, the Raja of Nadon (a mountainous tract bordering on the Punjab), who was threatened with invasion by the Raja of Jummoo and Mia Khan, a Mogul chief. Bhima Chand and his Sikh allies were completely successful, and drove the Raja of Jummoo and the Mahomedans across the Sutluj. Govind was next engaged with Dilawer Khan, Viceroy of the Punjab, whose son attempted to surprise the Sikhs, but his troops were seized with a panic and fled. In a subsequent general action (in which Govind was not present) the Sikhs routed the army of Hosain Khan (one of the commanders of Dilawer Khan), who was killed. Upon this, the viceroy marched in person against the Sikhs, who had become disheartened at the loss of some of their forts and the death of several of their leaders, and especially at the accounts they received of the rage of the Emperor Aurungzeb, who, in 1701, detached his son, Bahadur Shah, to settle the disturbances in the Punjab. Govind acknowledges that, on the approach of the prince, his own followers were struck with terror; many de-

serted him and fled to the mountains. Upon this occasion, he promises in his work prosperity here and eternal blessings hereafter to those who adhere to their Guru, imprecating all the miseries of this world and the torments of the next upon those who desert him. "The man who does this," he says, "shall have no offspring; his parents shall die in grief and sorrow; he shall perish like a dog, and be cast into hell."* He concludes by expatiating upon the shame that attends apostasy, and the rewards that await those who remain true to their religion.

The numbers of the Sikhs, however, were yet too small to accomplish the plans of their leader. An imperial army, joined by the rajas of Kahilar (or Khalore), Jiswal, and others, who had been defeated and disgraced by Govind, marched into the Punjab to punish the Sikhs, who were compelled to shut themselves up in their fortresses, where

* There is a passage in this chapter of the work which seems to imply an acknowledgment of the emperor's temporal supremacy; that the Guru was the king of the religion of the Sikhs, and the emperor the "Lord of the World."

they were besieged, and they endured all the miseries of sickness and famine. Govind, after suffering great hardships, determined to attempt his escape. He ordered his followers to leave the fort one by one, at midnight, and disperse; he quitted it amongst the rest, and reached Chamkour, the raja of which place was his friend. The enemy entered the fort the moment he had left it, and finding there Govind's mother and two children, with others who could not be removed, they were carried to Foujdar Khan, the governor of Sirhind, by whose orders, or those of Vizir Khan, they were inhumanly massacred. The imperial army, aided by the rajas hostile to Govind, marched to Chamkour and besieged it. The Guru, in despair, clasping his hands, invoked Bhavani Durga, the sanguinary goddess of the sword,* and prepared, with his few followers, to make a desperate effort.

The imperial army was commanded by

* The sword is an object of veneration or worship amongst the Govind Sikhs, as it was amongst the Getes, the Scythian ancestors of the Jats, from whom the Sikhs are descended.

Khwajeh Mahomed and Nahar Khan, who sent a message to the Sikh leader, to the effect that the forces were not those of rival rajas, but belonged to the great Aurungzeb: "Shew, therefore, your respect," they said, "and embrace the true faith." The envoy added, as from himself, in friendly advice:— "Leave off contending with us, and playing the infidel; you can never succeed in such an unequal war." Ajeet Singh, the son of Govind, drawing his scimitar, exclaimed,— "Utter another word, and I will smite your head from your body and cut you to pieces, for daring so to address our chief." The envoy, boiling with rage, returned with this defiance to the imperial camp.

The siege commenced with vigour; the Sikhs, especially Ajeet Singh and Runjeet Singh, the sons of Govind, exhibited acts of prodigious valour. The former fell; and although Govind himself shewed an invincible spirit, and killed with his own hand one of the Mahomedan commanders (Nahar Khan), and wounded the other, he found it impossible to contend with such superior numbers, and in a dark night fled from

Chamkour, "covering his face for shame at his own disgrace." At Chamkour, as well as at the other forts where Sikhs were taken, they had their noses and ears cut off.

A sense of his own misfortunes, the loss of his children, his humiliation, the sufferings of his followers, and the threatened ruin of the sect, according to most accounts, robbed Govind of his reason, and he became a fugitive and a lunatic, so that the rest of his history is not correctly known. One writer states that he died in the Punjab; another, at Patna; a third, that his military talents recommended him to Bahadur Shah, who gave him a small military command in the Deccan, where he was stabbed by a Patan, and expired of the wound at Naded (or Nander), a small town on the Cavery river, in 1708.

"In the character of this reformer of the Sikhs," observes Sir John Malcolm, "it is impossible not to recognize many of those features which have distinguished the most celebrated founders of political communities. The object he attempted was great and

laudable. It was the emancipation of his tribe from oppression and persecution; and the means which he adopted were such as a comprehensive mind could alone have suggested. The Muhammedan conquerors of India, as they added to their territories, added to their strength, by making proselytes through the double means of persuasion and force; and these, the moment they had adopted their faith, became the supporters of their power against the efforts of the Hindus, who, bound in the chains of their civil and religious institutions, could neither add to their number by admitting converts, nor allow more than a small proportion of the population of the country to arm against the enemy. Govind saw that he could only hope for success by a bold departure from usages which were calculated to keep those, by whom they were observed, in a degraded subjection to an insulting and intolerant race. 'You make Hindus Muhammedans, and are justified by your laws,' he is said to have written to Aurungzeb; 'now I, on a principle of self-preservation,

which is superior to all laws, will make Muhammedans Hindus.* You may rest,' he added, 'in fancied security; but, beware! for I will teach the sparrow to strike the eagle to the ground:' a fine allusion to his design of inspiring the lowest races among the Hindus with that valour and ambition which would lead them to perform the greatest actions."

Guru Govind appears to have had in view not merely the separation of the Sikhs from the Hindus, but the overthrow of a system of civil policy, which, being interwoven with the religion of a submissive race, made them slaves to their priesthood, and though calcu lated to retain a community in obedience to its rulers, made them an easy conquest to any powerful foreign invader.

Guru Govind was the last acknowledged ruler of the Sikhs; a prophecy had limited their spiritual guides to the number of ten,

* "Meaning Sikhs, whose faith, though it differs widely from the present worship of the Hindus, has been thought to have considerable analogy to the pure and simple religion, originally followed by that nation."

and their superstition, aided no doubt by the action of that spirit of independence which his institutions had introduced, caused its fulfilment.

Happily for the Sikhs, the persecutions of the Mahomedans were suspended by the distractions of the empire, and only exalted their fanaticism, and inspired a gloomy spirit of vengeance, which broke out under Banda (or Bandu), a bairagi (or religious ascetic), the friend and a devoted follower of Guru Govind, a man of daring character and sanguinary disposition, who established their union under his banners; and the Sikhs gradually assumed the character and rank of a military nation.*

* This chapter is taken principally from Sir John Malcolm's Sketch (As. Res. vol. ix.), enlarged and corrected from the writings of Sir Chas. Wilkins, Professor Wilson, Major Browne, Mr. Mill, Mr. Elphinstone, &c. &c.

CHAPTER V.

THE RELIGION, GOVERNMENT, AND INSTITUTIONS OF THE SIKHS.

THE religion of the Sikhs, or Nanuk-Shahis, like that of the primitive Hindus, is based upon a pure deism, a belief in one God, the Creator of the Universe. The original sect of Nanuk has, however, branched into various sub-sects, which are not confined to the Punjab, but to be found in various parts of India.

It has been already mentioned that Nanuk had imbibed the tenets of the Kabir Pantis, and was apparently contemporary with the founder, who is claimed by both Mahomedans and Hindus, a fact indicative of the Catholic spirit of his doctrines. In one of Kabir's works occurs the following passage:—"Of what benefit is cleaning your mouth, counting your beads, performing ablution, and bowing yourself in temples, when, whilst

you mutter your prayers, or journey to Mecca and Medina, deceitfulness is in your heart? The Hindu fasts every eleventh day; the Musulman during the Ramazan. Who formed the remaining months and days, that you should venerate but one? If the Creator dwell in tabernacles, whose residence is the universe? Behold but one in all things; He, whose is the world, is my Guru (teacher), He is my Pir (saint)." The Kabir Pantis restrict their belief to one God; they assert that he has a body formed of the five elements of matter; but he is free from all defects of human nature, and can assume what particular shape he pleases, though in all other respects he does not differ from man. He is, however, eternal, without end or beginning, and the origin of all things, the elementary matter, of which he consists and of which all things and all beings are made, residing in him before they took their present form. They recognize the doctrine of transmigration, and apparently the never-dying nature of man, who is ultimately absorbed into the Divine essence. The Kabir Pantis regard heaven and hell, in

the senses attached to the terms by Hindus and Mahomedans, as inventions of Maya, the principle of falsehood and delusion; considering hell to be only the torments of this world. The moral code of the Kabir Pantis is short, but of a favourable tendency. Humanity is a cardinal virtue, and the shedding of blood a heinous crime, since life is the gift of God, and must not be violated by his creatures. Truth is the other great principle of their code, since all the ills of the world, and ignorance of God, they attribute to original falsehood. Retirement from the world is desirable, because the passions and desires, the hopes and fears, which the social state engenders, are hostile to tranquillity and purity of spirit, and prevent that undisturbed meditation upon man and God which is necessary to their comprehension.*

The doctrine taught by Nanuk differed little from that of Kabir, and deviated inconsiderably from the pure principles of the Hindu faith in general. "The whole body

* Wilson on Hindu Sects.—As. Res. vol. xvi. p. 73.

of poetical and mythological fiction was retained, whilst the liberation of the spirit from the delusive deceits of Maya, and its purification by acts of benevolence and self-denial, so as to make it identical even in life with its Divine source, were the great objects of the devotee. Associated with these notions was great chariness of animal life, whilst, with Nanuk as with Kabir, universal tolerance was a dogma of vital importance, and both laboured to persuade Hindus and Mahomedans that the only essential parts of their respective creeds were common to both, and that they should discard the varieties of practical details, as the corruptions of their teachers, for the worship of one only Supreme, whether he was termed Allah or Hari."* Nanuk's object was to reform, not to destroy, the religion in which he was born, and he treats the Hindu creed, even its polytheism and its veneration for the cow, with respect, and he speaks of Mahomed and his successors with moderation; condemning, however, their endeavours to propagate their

* Wilson, As. Res. vol. xvii. p. 233.

faith by the sword. "That prophet," he says, "was sent by God to do good, and to disseminate the knowledge of one God, through means of the *Koran*." He seems to have blended, with a belief in a future state of rewards and punishments, the Hindu doctrine of the metempsychosis. In all his writings he borrowed indiscriminately from the *Koran* and the *Sastras*.

The most acceptable offerings to God, according to Nanuk, are morning praise, and the presentation of the body to him; he promised the person who did this, the Divine favour and future absorption into the Deity. "He who serves God, the fountain of all good," says the *Adi Grant'h*, "will obtain his blessing. God is served by listening to his excellencies, by meditating upon them, and by celebrating their praise: the method of which is to be obtained from a spiritual guide, who is above all the gods, and in fact, God himself."* The following is one of the hymns sung by the Nanuk-Shahis:†

* Ward, View of the Hindus, vol. iii. p. 460.

† Wilson, *ut ante*.

Thou art the Lord—to thee be praise.
All life is with thee.
Thou art my parents; I am thy child.
All happiness is derived from thy clemency.
No one knows thy end.
Highest Lord amongst the highest—
Of all that exists, Thou art the Regulator,
And all that is from thee obeys thy will.
Thy movements, thy pleasure, thou only knowest.
Nanuk, thy slave, is a free-will offering unto thee.

Nanuk declared that "hearing the praises of God is followed by every degree of exaltation (subject to future births), even to the dignity of the gods. Meditation upon God is followed by unspeakable gain, even by absorption in God. The Deity has created innumerable worlds; the period of creation is known only to himself." In reply to a question from a disciple, respecting the value of outward ceremonies, Nanuk, without altogether denying the value of ceremonies, recommended mental worship as of greater importance. "The knowledge of God," he says, "is more than all ceremonies." He objected to separate religious societies, and persuaded his followers to unite themselves to the whole human

race. "The earth, and all worlds," he says, "are upheld by Religion, the mother of which is Compassion, who dwells with Contentment." He commands obedience to "the Being who is unchangeable and eternal, who dwells in truth." He compares the human body to a field, the mind to the husbandman, the praises of God to seed, and absorption into God to the fruit. Although Nanuk established his reputation for sanctity by the performance of severe ascetic penance,—living upon sand, and sleeping upon sharp pebbles,—Arjunmal declares that God is not compelled to grant blessings by any works of merit; devotion alone has this power over God.* His opinion, that the Deity is a pervading spirit, unconfined by space or locality,—

Deus est quodcunque vides, ubicunque moveris,—

is shewn by the remarkable answer Nanuk gave to a Mahomedan priest, who, when the former was lying on the ground, with his feet in the direction of Mecca, exclaimed, "How darest thou, infidel, turn thy feet

* Ward, *ut ante.*

towards the house of God?" "Turn then, if you can," replied Nanuk mildly, "where the house of God is not."

The pacific spirit of his doctrines is indicated by this injunction of Nanuk: "Put on armour that will harm no one; let thy coat of mail be that of understanding, and convert thy enemies to friends: fight with valour, but with no weapon but the word of God."*

(12) Both Nanuk and Guru Govind expressly forbid all worship of images.

(13) Sir John Malcolm says there is no ground to conclude that caste was altogether abolished by Nanuk; though his writings had a tendency to equalize the Hindus. In the *Adi Grant'h*, he declares that vice and bad qualities are the only distinctions between men; that a person of wicked principles, however high his birth and rank, is on a level with one of the lowest caste. "Such a man, though he surround himself with a fence, lest he should be defiled,"—alluding to the practice of high-caste Hindus, who sometimes draw a circle round them, when they eat, to escape

* Malcolm, *ut ante.*

accidental pollution,—"deceives himself; he in fact eats with a chandala. Speaking truth is the best purifier of the body; good works the best fence, and repeating the name of God, the best ablution: excellence of character is confined to him who preserves himself from evil.*

The *Adi Grant'h* is in verse; many of the chapters, written by Nanuk, are termed *Pidi*, which means literally a ladder or flight of steps, and metaphorically, that by which a man ascends. Translations from this work have been given by Sir John Malcolm, Mr. Ward, and Professor Wilson.

The *Dasama Padshah ka Grant'h*, written by Guru Govind, is considered as holy as the *Adi Grant'h*. The work, which is elegantly written in the Punjabi dialect, contains an account of the author's mission "to establish virtue, exalt piety, and exterminate the wicked." It is less tolerant towards the Mahomedan tenets than the *Adi Grant'h*, and more favourable towards those of the Hindus, which is ascribed to Govind's education at Mathura.

* Ward, *ut ante*.

The Sikhs, or Nanuk-Shahis, are classed under seven distinctions, all recognizing Nanuk as their primitive instructer, and all professing to follow his doctrines; but separated from each other by variations of practice, or by a distinct and peculiar teacher.

1. The *Udasis* may be regarded as the genuine disciples of Nanuk, professing (as the name denotes) indifference to worldly vicissitudes. They are purely religious characters; devoting themselves to prayer and meditation, and are usually collected in sangats, colleges or convents; they also travel about to places of pilgrimage, generally in parties of some strength. They profess poverty, although they never solicit alms; and although ascetics, they place no merit in wearing mean garments, or dispensing altogether with clothes; on the contrary, they are in general well dressed, and, allowing the whiskers and beard to grow, are not unfrequently of a venerable and imposing appearance. Though usually practising celibacy, it does not appear to be a necessary condition: they are usually the ministrant priests, but their office consists

chiefly in reading and expounding the writings of Nanuk and Govind Singh, as collected in the *Adi Grant'h* and *Das Padshah ki Grant'h*. With that fondness for sensible objects of reverence which characterizes the natives of India, the book is also worshipped, and rupees, flowers, and fruits are presented by the votaries, which become, of course, the property of the officiating Udasi. In return, the Udasi not uncommonly adopts the presentation of the Prasada. Mr. Moorcroft says he had seldom met with persons of more simple, unaffected, and pious manners than the Udasis.

2. *Ganj Bakshis.*—Of this division, which is not numerous, little is known.

3. The *Ramrayis.*—These derive their appellation from that of Ram Ray (son or grandson of Har Ray), who disputed unsuccessfully the succession to the pontificate with Har Crishin, son of Har Ray. Their distinction from the other Sikhs is more of a political than a religious complexion.

4. The *Suthreh Shahis* are more common than the two preceding; they lead a vagabond life, begging and singing songs, mostly

of a moral or mystical tendency. They are not unfrequently gamblers, drunkards, and thieves, and are held in great disrepute. They look up to Tegh Bahadur, the father of Guru Govind, as their founder.

5. The *Govind Singhs.*—These form the most important division of the Sikh community; being, in fact, the political association to which the name is applied, or to the Sikh nation generally. Although professing to derive their national faith from Nanuk, and holding his memory in veneration, the faith they follow is widely different from the quietism of that reformer, and is chiefly of a worldly and warlike spirit. Guru Govind devoted his followers to steel, and hence the worship of the sword, as well as its employment against both Mahomedans and Hindus. By his institutions he separated the Sikhs, in political constitution, as well as religious tenets, from the Hindus, though they still worship the deities of that people, and derive their legends from the same source. The Govind Singhs pay great veneration to Bramins, notwithstanding their avowed rejection of caste.

6. The *Nirmalas* differ but little from the Udasis, and are, perhaps, still closer adherents to the doctrines of the founder (as the name imports), professing to be free from all worldly stain, and leading a wholly religious life. They observe celibacy, and disregard their personal appearance, often going nearly naked. They are not, like the Udasis, assembled in colleges, nor do they hold any particular form of divine service, but confine their devotion to speculative meditation on, or perusal of, the writings of Nanuk, Kabir, and other Unitarian teachers. They are always solitary, supported by their disciples or opulent individuals, and are often known as able expounders of the Vedanta philosophy, in which the Bramins do not disdain to become their scholars.

7. The *Nagas*, or naked mendicants, are not distinguishable from the Nirmalas, except in going without clothes.

The dharmsalas, or temples of the Sikhs, are in general plain buildings. They are built by rich men, or by several uniting to defray the expense. They have a flat roof,

and are sufficiently capacious to accommodate a multitude of attendants, who sit or stand during worship. Images are banished. The bungas, or temples, at Amritsur, surrounding the Holy Tank, are fine buildings; each missul (or association of Sikhs) has a separate bunga. The forms of prayer and praise are simple. Portions of the *Adi Grant'h* are read or sung; the priest says, "Meditate upon the Book," and the people reply "*Wah, Guru! Wah, Guru ki Fateh!*" Guru Govind not only introduced the worship of Doorga and the sword, but, it is said, offered sacrifices at her festivals. In the *Dasama Padshah ki Grant'h* she is represented as the tutelary goddess of war.

Baron Hügel has furnished a description of the sacred temple of Hari Mander at Amritsur,* which he visited in 1836. The

* The holy city of Amritsur is about midway between the Ravi and the Beas, and thirty-two miles from Lahore. Baron Hügel describes it as larger than Lahore, and the abode of the great merchants, and says the whole wealth of the Punjab seems collected in it. The streets are narrow, but the houses are tolerably lofty, built of burnt brick. The chief entrance to the temple is very unpretending, and inclosed by houses.

temple, he says, is particularly mysterious and romantic in its character. It is surmounted by a golden roof, very skilfully contrived, and is inlaid with marble, a large door of gold opening into the temple, which is surrounded with little vestibules, the ceilings being supported by richly ornamented pillars. Before the entrance to the bridge are two large banners of red: on one is written,

houses. The *tulao*, or sacred tank, is about 150 paces square, and has a large body of water, which appears to be supplied by a natural artesian well; it is surrounded by a pavement twenty or twenty-five paces broad. Round this square are some of the most considerable houses of the city, and buildings belonging to the temple; the whole being inclosed by gates. The bathers descend by stone steps into the water, which is as clear as a mirror. In the midst of the tank stands the temple of Hari Mander, which is reached by a bridge. The holiest place of bathing is on the east side, opposite to which stand some small buildings, in which gurus and fakirs are seated. Another, untenanted, is shown as the place where Ram Das passed his life. Several fanciful-looking structures are before the eastern entrance. "A lugubrious sound of music," says the Baron, "proceeded thence, and a guru, clad in silk, appeared seated under the canopy belonging to a throne on the first story, surrounded by a sort of court or levee. Every bather, on returning from ablution, brings a present to these gurus."

"*Wah! Guruji ki Fateh!*" in white letters; on the other, the name of Ram Das. In the centre of the temple sat the first guru of the Sikh faith on a throne of cushions, with a carpet of Cashmere shawl stuff before him. A large circle of devotees and followers had formed around him, leaving an open space, which is never encroached upon. The guru kept his eyes fixed upon the *Grant'h*, or Holy Book.

Daily worship is performed by pious Sikhs, either in the dwelling-house, or in a place devoted to religious uses. Portions of the Scriptures are read every day by those who possess the books, and those who do not, repeat the names of Nanuk or Govind. The followers of these personages have become accustomed, in violation of their creed, to pay them divine honours, regarding the former especially (to whose tomb they make pilgrimages) as a saint and saviour.

The principal of the religious institutions of Guru Govind is that of *Pahal*, the ceremony by which a convert is initiated and made a member of the Sikh Khalsa, or commonwealth. The forms which Govind em-

ployed are still observed. The neophyte is told by the officiating Granthi, or priest, that he must allow his hair to grow. When it has grown a month or two, he dresses himself in blue from head to foot, and is then presented with five weapons, a sword, a firelock, a bow, an arrow, and a pike. The candidate and the initiator wash their feet with water, in which sugar is put, and this nectar (called *pahal*) is stirred with a steel knife or dagger; five quatrains from the Scriptures being read. Between each quatrain, the breath is exhaled with a puff, and the beverage stirred as before. The hands of the convert are then joined, and the Granthi, or initiator, pours some of the nectar into them, of which he drinks five times, rubbing a little on his head and beard, exclaiming "*Wah! Guruji ka Khalsa! Wah! Guruji ki Fateh!*" or, "*Wah! Govind Singh, ap hi Guru chela!*" 'Hail Govind, preceptor and pupil.'* The disciple is then asked whether he consents to be of the faith, and if

* Govind, who instituted the *pahal*, it is said, went through this form with five of his followers, drinking of the water which had washed each other's feet.

he answers that he does consent, the priest enjoins him to abandon all intercourse with five sects, which are named; to be gentle and courteous to all; to strive to attain wisdom; to consider the interests of the Khalsa or state as paramount to his own, and make every sacrifice in support of it and its members: whatever he has received from God he is told it is his duty to share with others. He is directed to read the Scriptures every morning and every evening, and, at present, the priest worships the sacred book and prepares a meat-offering. The priest then demands the name of the convert, and if it be insignificant, it is changed for another, the epithet *singh* is added, and he is declared duly initiated. The priest then teaches him an incantation, to which the Sikhs pay great reverence. Women are made Sikhs in the same manner as men, except that the nectar is stirred with the back instead of the edge of the knife. The children of Sikhs go through this ceremony at an early age.*

The government of the Sikhs was originally founded upon their religion, and even now

* Malcolm and Ward (*ut ante*) and Murray.

they regard their Khalsa, or commonwealth, as a theocracy, taking in a literal sense the dying expressions of Guru Govind. "I have delivered over the Khalsa," said he to those who surrounded his bed, inquiring to whom he would bequeath his authority, "to God, who never dies. I have been your guide, and will still preserve you; read the *Grant'h*, and observe its injunctions, and whoever remains true to the state, him will I aid." Hence the Sikhs believe that they were placed by their last and most revered pontiff under the peculiar care of God. Until the late Runjeet Singh overthrew the republican form of government, their chief ruler professed himself the servant of the Khalsa, which acted, in times of great emergency, by means of a national council, the Guru-mata, of which every chief was a member, and this council was supposed to deliberate and resolve under the immediate inspiration and impulse of that invisible being who always watched over the interests of the commonwealth.

The duty, or privilege, of convening the Guru-mata, or great national council, which was intended to exercise a supreme authority

over the republic, belonged to, or was assumed by, the Akalis, a class of devotees, who, under the double character of fanatical priests and desperate soldiers, usurped the sole direction of affairs at Amritsur, and were consequently the leading persons in a council, held at that sacred place, which deliberated under the influence of religious enthusiasm.

The Akalis were first established by Guru Govind, whose institutes they zealously defended against the innovations of Banda. Their name is derived from *Akali-purusha*, 'Worshippers of the Eternal,' the word *Akal* being a compound of *kal*, 'death,' and the privative *a*, meaning 'never-dying,' or 'immortal.' It is one of the epithets of the Deity, and is given to this class from their exclaiming "Akal, Akal," in their devotions. They wear blue chequered dresses, and bangles or bracelets of steel round their wrists, which all Sikhs do not wear; though it is indispensable to have steel about the person, generally in the shape of a knife or dagger. They formerly initiated converts, and had almost the sole direction of the religious ceremonies at Amritsur, of which they still claim

to be the defenders. They have a fine bunga, or temple, on the bank of the sacred tank or reservoir at that place. Though possessed of property, they affect poverty, and extort alms from chiefs and others, by interdicting them from the performance of religious rites; a chief unpopular with the Akalis, who make common cause with each other, risks his authority. The Akalis have a great interest in maintaining the religion and government of the Sikhs, as established by Guru Govind, upon which their influence depends.

When a Guru-mata is called (as it ought to be upon any emergency), the Sikh chiefs and leaders assemble at Amritsur, and the council is convened by the Akalis; all private animosities are then supposed to cease, and every man is expected to sacrifice his personal feelings and interests to the good of the Khalsa. When the members are seated, the holy books are placed before them, to which they bend their heads, with the customary exclamations, "*Wah! Guruji ka Khalsa! Wah! Guruji ki Fateh!*" Cakes, made of wheat, butter, and sugar, are placed upon the sacred volumes, covered with a cloth. These

holy cakes (made in commemoration of an injunction of Nanuk) receive the salutation of the assembly: the members then rise; the Akalis pray aloud, and musicians play. When the prayers are finished, the Akalis desire the council to sit, and the cakes, being uncovered, are eaten by all classes, high and low, and whether of Hindu or Mahomedan family (for distinctions of original creed, and even of caste, have crept into their constitution), as a token of union in one common cause. The Akalis then exclaim, "Sirdars (chiefs), this is a Guru-mata;" upon which, prayers are again said aloud. The chiefs then swear upon the sacred *Grant'h* to forget all feuds, and to join heart and soul in one common object. Under the excitement of religious fervour and patriotic devotion, they proceed to consider the danger which threatens the country, and the best means of averting it, and to choose the commander of the Khalsa armies.

The first Guru-mata was assembled by Guru Govind; the latest in 1805, when the British army pursued Holkar into the Punjab.

Since the cessation of the Guru-matas, the Akalis have lost much of their influence; they are not regarded as priests, but as ruffian soldiers, and are not confined to Amritsur, but are to be found all over the Punjab, and even in British India. The Grant'his, or readers of the *Grant'h*, and the Pujaries, or priests, even at Amritsur, are no longer Akalis.

The head of the Khalsa, both spiritual and temporal, was the supreme priest or pontiff; the principal chiefs (all descended from Hindu tribes) exercised local authority, receiving a share of the revenue they collected. Their little village communities, termed sangats, were under the direction of a headman. Their laws were imperfect, the principles alone being deduced from their scriptures, which inculcate general maxims of justice, but contain no fixed code. Arbitration was, and is still, the common mode of deciding civil questions, which is formally conducted in a Punchayet, or 'Court of Five.' Other questions are referred to the heads of villages, or to the chiefs, and their adjudication, when by consent, is final. In criminal cases, the

chief punishes the offender ; but more generally, even in cases of murder, retaliation is resorted to and permitted. But these subjects will be more fully treated in the succeeding chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MANNERS, RULES, AND CUSTOMS OF THE MODERN SIKHS.*

Manners.—The accomplishments of reading and writing are uncommon amongst the Sikhs, and are chiefly confined to Hindu and Musulman mutsuddees, or clerks, who acquire a sufficient knowledge of the Persian language to enable them to keep the accounts, and to conduct the epistolary correspondence of the chiefs. The Gurmukha, or Punjabi written dialect, is familiar to many Sikhs; but, in general, they express a rooted aversion to the acquisition of the Arabic and Persian languages, resulting chiefly from the ideas instilled, and prejudices imbibed, in early age, against every thing, however useful and rational, that bears relation to, and

* This chapter is the work of Captain Murray, and, with a few indispensable alterations, is exactly as he left it.

is connected with, the religion and education of the Musulmans.

Concerns are transacted by oral testimony, verbal agreements, and promises. The test of right is confined to the memory of the oldest inhabitants of a neighbourhood, and tradition preserves old customs. Falsehood, fraud, and perjury are the natural concomitants of such a mode of conducting affairs. Money, fear, and favour can purchase an oath, can determine a village boundary dispute, and screen a criminal from detection, and the infliction of punishment. In some instances, an accused person will call for the *dibb*, or ordeal of innocence, plunge his fingers in boiling oil, bear a heated ploughshare on his hands for 50 to 100 yards, challenge his accuser to the trial by water, and, if he escape unhurt, his purity is declared, and freely acknowledged.

Witchcraft and spells (*jadoo* and *moot*) have a powerful influence over the fancies and actions of the chiefs and other inhabitants of the Sikh states. A sudden indisposition, a vomiting of blood, or any unusual ailment, for the nature and cause of which a

native cannot very readily account, are generally attributed to the malice and invention of a rival, or to an evil-disposed member of the family. The possession of a waxen or dough effigy, some party-coloured threads, and small human bones, discovered in the dwelling, or about the person, of a suspected individual, are convincing proofs of guilt and wickedness.

"The harmless flame, which insensibly," says Gibbon, "melted a waxen image, might derive a powerful and pernicious energy from the affrighted fancy of the person whom it was maliciously designed to represent." One of the reasons Raja Juswunt Singh, of Nabah, assigned for his wish to disinherit his eldest son and heir was, that he had been engaged in some mischievous practices, and destructive enchantments, with one Bhae Dighanu, to ruin the health of his father. Sirdar Bhoop Singh, of Roopur, advanced a similar charge against his uncle, Darwa Singh. Both these chiefs bear the character of being well-informed men, and wiser than their neighbours. Rutun Koonwur, the widow of Muhtab Singh, chief of Thanesur,

N 2

adopted a sickly boy, to whom she became immoderately attached, and vainly hoped he might be admitted to succeed to the landed property she held for life. In 1828, the boy died, and Rutun Koonwur, in a paroxysm of grief, filed a formal complaint, charging his death, through magical arts, to her nephew, Jumerut Singh, producing in court some body-clothes, and on no better evidence, directing her vakeel to prosecute him for murder. The case was set at rest by reasoning on its absurdity, and Rutun Koonwur consoled herself by the adoption of another boy. In September, 1829, a thanadar of the Thanesur Rani hanged a Bramin suspected of magic. The Rani dismissed the thanadar from his situation.

Good and bad omens, lucky and unlucky days, and particular hours of the day and night for commencing a journey and returning home, are carefully observed by the Sikhs, and by all other classes in the Punjab, whether engaged in the most momentous enterprises, or in the common concerns of life. To hear a partridge call on your right hand as you enter a town—cranes

passing from left to right—meeting a bare-headed person—a jackass braying as you enter a town or village—a dog shaking his head and ears on quitting home—to meet a corpse or a Bramin—to hear a female jackal howling during the night—sneezing on going out or coming into a house or room, &c. &c., are bad omens. The contrary are good omens: to hear a partridge call on your left—cranes passing from right to left—to meet a Mehtur or Sweeper—to behold pearls in your sleep, &c. If a Mussulman dream of seeing the moon, it is as good as an *interview with the prophet.** Prior to the field being taken with an army,† a visit of cere-

* An eminent native merchant came to me on business from Amritsur, and died at Lodiana, of the cholera morbus. His followers very gravely told me that my remedies must be unavailing, for, on entering the town, many bare-headed men of the Goojur caste had been met by the deceased.

† A gang of burglars being brought before me, in 1819, admitted in evidence, that two pieces of coloured muslin had been tossed over their left shoulders, on hearing a jackal call on their right hand, soon after quitting Kurnal, where the burglary had been perpetrated. *Deesa-sool* are unlucky days—Saturday and Monday, to the east—Sunday and Friday, to the west —Tuesday

mony being paid to a distant friend, or a pilgrimage being made, the Muhurut, or auspicious moment for departure, and return, must be predicted by a Pundit, and the Pundit on his part is guided by the jogme, or spirits, which pervade every quarter of the compass. To avert the pernicious consequences likely to ensue from unfavourable prognostics or dreams, charity is recommended, and in general given very freely, on such occasions, by natives of rank and wealth. These, and many hundred other absurd prejudices and superstitious notions, are carried into the most solemn affairs of state. It was no uncommon practice of Runjeet Singh, when he contemplated any serious undertaking, to direct two slips of paper to be placed on the *Grant'h Sohil*, or sacred volume of the Sikhs. On the one was written his wish, and on the other the reverse. A little boy was then brought in, and told to bring one of the slips, and, whichever it might happen to be, his highness was

—Tuesday and Wednesday, to the north, and Thursday to the south. The contrary are *Siddh Jog*, or lucky days.

as satisfied as if it were a voice from heaven. A knowledge of these whims and prepossessions is useful and necessary. They obtain, under varied shapes, and in diversified shades, throughout the Eastern world, warping the opinions, and directing the public and private affairs, of all ranks in society, from the despot to the peasant, from the soldier in the battle-field, to the criminal at the tree of execution.*

Administration of Justice.—In the Sikh states, the administration of civil and criminal justice is vested in the Sirdar or chief. Crimes and trespasses, as in the middle ages, are atoned for by money: the fines are unlimited by any rule, and generally levied

* When the Sirhind division, composed entirely of sipahees, was directed, under the command of Sir David Ochterlony, against the Goorkha power, in 1814, it was suggested by Nund Singh, the accredited agent of Runjeet Singh, that the first march should be made at the dussera. It being mentioned to him, that this was too early, he begged that the tents and a few men might move out on that day. He was gratified, and the success that attended this division in all its operations was attributed more to the choice of an auspicious hour, than to the wisdom, prudence, and gallantry of its commander, his officers, and men.

arbitrarily, according to the means of the offender, whose property is attached, and his family placed under restraint, to enforce payment. These amerciaments form a branch of revenue to the chief, and a fruitful source of peculation to his officers, who too frequently have recourse to the most harsh and cruel means to elicit confessions, and extort money for real or imaginary offences. He who gains his point, pays his *Shookurana*, or present of gratitude, and he who is cast, pays his *Jureemana*, or penalty. The wealthy may secure justice, but the indigent are likely to obtain something less. The larger the bribe the more chance of success. A case where the right is clear and undeniable is often allowed to lie over, that the present may be augmented. All officers under the chief, and employed by him in districts and departments, follow his example, but are ultimately thrown into a *bora*, or dungeon, and required to refund; and, when they have satisfied the cupidity of their superior, they are generally permitted to resume their functions, honoured with the shawl, as a mark of favour. Capital punishment is very

seldom inflicted. The most incorrigible culprits are punished with the loss of either one or both hands, and deprivation of nose or ears; but mutilation is rare, for whoever has the means to pay, or can procure a respectable security to pay for him within a given time, may expiate the most heinous transgressions.*

On the commission of a *daka* or burglary, a *quzzakee*,† or highway robbery, the chief, within whose jurisdiction the act has been perpetrated, is called upon to make restitution; and, should he decline, the chief whose subject has suffered resorts to the *lex talionis*, and drives off several hundred head of cattle, or retaliates in some way or other. This summary method of obtaining indemnification for all robberies attended with aggravating circumstances is a measure of absolute necessity, as many of the petty

* Statutes were passed in the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Elizabeth, and James I., sanctioning and directing the loss of the right and left hand, and of an ear, for offences which would by a Sikh scarcely be deemed deserving the infliction of a mulct.

† This is an Arabic or Turkish word. In the provincial dialect we have *dharwee*.

chiefs, their officers and zemindars, harbour thieves, and participate in their guilty practices.

When a petty theft is substantiated, either through the medium of a *muhur-khae*, or the production of a *mooddo* or *numoona* (the confession of one of the thieves, or a part of the stolen property), the sufferer has generally, as a preliminary, to pay the *chuarum*, or fourth, as a perquisite to the chief, or his thanadar, ere he can recover the amount of his losses. Independent of this, the *muhurkhae*, or approver, generally stipulates for a full pardon, and that no demand shall be made on the confessing delinquent for his *kundee*, viz., any or such portion of the property as may have accrued to him as his dividend of the spoil. This share of the spoil becomes chargeable to the other thieves, and on settling accounts it is distributed equally amongst them.

In all cases of stolen cattle, it is an established rule, when the *sooragh-khoj*, or trace of the footsteps, is carried to the gate, or into the fields, of any village, the zemindars of that village must either shew the

track beyond their own boundary, and allow the village to be searched, or pay the value of the cattle.*

Rules of Succession.—The rules of succession to landed property in the Sikh States are arbitrary, and are variously modified in accordance with the usages, the interests and prejudices of different families, nor is it practicable to reduce the anomalous system to a fixed and leading principle. A distinction obtains, in the Canons of Inheritance, between the Manjee and Malawa Sikhs, or Singhs: the former are so termed from the tract situated between the Ravi and Beas rivers, from which they originally sprung, migrating thence and extending their conquests through the Punjab, and into the Sirhind province, where, being of a military and predatory character, they soon conquered for themselves a permanent possession. The Malawa chiefs are, the Puteala, Jheend, and Naba Rajahs, and the Bhae of

* Hume, in treating of the Anglo-Saxons, says, "If any man could track his stolen cattle into another's ground, the latter was obliged to shew the tracks out of it, or pay their value."

Khytul. The three first-named are descendants of a common ancestor, named Phool, who was choudhuri of a village near Balenda, and are from him often collectively styled the Phoolkean. The progenitor of the Bhae of Khytul, having rendered some service to one of the Sikh Gurus, the appellation of Bhae, or 'brother,' was conferred upon him, as a mark of distinguished approbation; and the persons of all the Bhaes are consequently held in a degree of respect above their fellows.

The practice of succession to property, both real and personal, amongst the Manjee Singhs, is by *bhae-bund* and *choonda-bund*: the first being an equal distribution of all lands, forts, tenements, and moveables, among sons, with, in some instances, an extra or double share to the eldest, termed "*Khurch-Sirdari*," assimilating to the double share in the law of Moses.* *Choonda-bund* is an equal division among mothers for their respective male issue.†

* Deuteronomy, chap. xxi. vv. 15, 16, 17.

† This practice of *choonda-bund* is agreeable to the Hindu Law. Vyara says, "If there be many sons of one

When a Manjee Singh dies, leaving no male offspring, his brothers, or his nephews of the full blood, assume the right of succession, to which the widow or widows become competitors. According to the Shasters (if they may be considered applicable to public property and chiefships), the prior title of the widows is held;* but the Sikhs, with a view to avoid an open and direct violation of a known law, have a custom, termed *kurawa* or *chadur-dula*, which obtains in every family, with the exception of those of the Bhaes. The eldest surviving brother of the deceased places a white robe over, and the *neeth*, or ring, in the nose of, the widow, which ceremony constitutes her his wife.

This practice accords with the Hindu and

one man, by different mothers, but in equal number and alike by class, a distribution amongst the mothers is approved to Brihaspati." If there be many springs from one, alike in number and in class, but born of rival mothers, partition must be made by them, according to law, by the allotment of shares to the mothers.

* In the Bengal and most generally current Shasters, this is the rule: but not in the Mithila province (Tirhoot, &c.); the widow is there excluded, and receives only a maintenance.

Mosaic laws,* and acts as a counter-agent to the many evils attendant on female rule. If the free will of the widow were consulted, it is scarcely to be doubted, she would prefer the possession of power, and the charms of liberty, to the alternative of sacrificing her claims to her brother-in-law, and taking her station amongst his rival wives. Judging from the masculine disposition—want of modesty and of delicate feeling, which form the characteristic feature of Sikh females, necessity, and not choice, must have led them to yield to the adoption of an usage, which must often be repugnant to their natures, and disgusting to their thoughts.

On failure of brothers and nephews, the general practice is, equal division of lands and personal effects, amongst the surviving widows of Manjee Singhs.

Adoption by the widows is not allowed, and the female line is entirely excluded from

* Deuteronomy, chap. xxv. vv. 5 to 10.

Yajuyawoleya says, "If a brother die without male issue, let another approach the widow once in the proper season." And Menu ordains, "having espoused her in due form, she being clad in a white robe."

the succession, to prevent the estates merging in the possessions of another family.

The inconvenience and evil originating in the prevailing practice amongst the Manjee families, of successive and minute sub-divisions of landed property, aggravated by the system of coparcenary possession, are seen, felt, and acknowledged, and the mischief of such a system cannot be too soon remedied.

Amongst the Malawa Singhs, the rights of primogeniture in the males are respected, and jagirs, or grants of land, are assigned for the maintenance of younger sons, by which the many inconveniences, noticed in the practice or rule established amongst the Manjee families, are obviated.

The Malawa Singhs, with the exception of the Bhaes, sanction and admit the usage of *kurawa*, thereby opposing a bar to disputed succession between the brothers, nephews, and the widows of a deceased chief. The Bhaes of Khytul and other places, although they reject the union by kurawa, yet set aside the claims of a widow, in favour of the brothers and nephews of one dying without male issue. The widows of Bhaes re-

ceive small jagirs for their support during life.

The Mahomedan families scattered over the Sikh states, who have been enabled to preserve their existence and the shadow of power, reject the ordinances of their law-givers, and are guided by rules of their own forming. Were the Mahomedan and Hindu laws on inheritance, as inculcated by the *Shura* and *Mitakshara*, to be made the leading principle in succession to landed property, very few, if any, of the many principalities in India would remain entire, and a common distribution would become universal, to the extinction of great estates, and the annihilation of the chiefs with their aristocratical influence.

Boundary Disputes.—When the country, overrun by the Sikhs, had been parcelled out into new allotments, the former divisions into districts, as established during the reigns of the Delhi emperors, and recorded by the kanoongoes, or rule-tellers, became void, and much angry litigation arose, in respect to the village boundaries and waste lands. The cultivators originated the cause

of dispute, and the effect was, in most cases, an appeal to arms, and an effusion of blood, before the claims of the parties could be heard and decided by a convention of neighbouring zemindars, selected to draw a line of demarcation, and bound by a solemn oath to act impartially.*

The litigants made choice of an equal number of moonsifs, or arbitrators, in some cases one each, in others, two or three each. These committees would prolong their sittings for weeks and months, being all the while fed and paid by the parties, caressed and threatened by their chiefs, their relatives and friends, influenced by party spirit, governed by fear, and little verifying the saying common amongst them, of "*Punch men Purmesur*."† Five different modes of accommodation were in general adoption amongst these Punchayets. 1st. An equal

* The oath administered to the person who erects the boundary pillars, if a Hindu, is the gunga-jul, or the chour, or raw hide of the cow, or swearing by his son. If a Musulman, the *Koran*, or the placing his hands on his son's head. The chour, and swearing by his own child, are the most binding.

† 'There is a divinity in the Punchayet.'

division of the land in dispute. 2nd. The Punchayet selected the oldest and most respectable member of their committee, to define the limit, the others consenting to abide by his award. 3rd. A moiety of the line of demarcation was drawn by the arbiters of the one party, and the remaining portion by those of the other. 4th. The Punchayet referred the final adjustment to an old inhabitant of a neighbouring village, upon whose local knowledge and experience they placed more reliance than on their own limited information. 5th. It sometimes occurred to the Punchayet to leave the division in the hands of one of the disputants, whose probity was established in the vicinity.

Village boundary disputes, attended with aggravating circumstances, between the chiefs and cultivators of contiguous and rival states, are of daily occurrence, and the right and title to the smallest slip of land is contested with an obstinacy quite disproportionate to its intrinsic value. Little attention is paid by the chiefs or their subjects to the justice or reasonableness of a case; it is quite sufficient, according to Sikh notions, that a claim

be advanced and presented, as something may be obtained, and nothing can be lost, by the reference to a Punchayet, which will use its endeavours to please, and harmonize its decision to the wants and wishes of those by whom it has been selected. Bloodshed between zemindars, in a boundary dispute, is sometimes atoned for by giving a nata, or daughter, in marriage to a relative of the deceased, or commuted to the payment of 150 to 200 rupees, or 125 bigahs of land. In general, however, revenge is sought, and the *khoonbuha*, or price of blood, deemed insufficient satisfaction, particularly when a mother has to lament the loss of a favourite child, or a wife, with a family, the bereavement of a husband.

Claims to islands in a river flowing between two manors, and to alluvions, are determined by what is called the *kuchmuch*, or *kishti-bunna*, which practice or rule assigns the land to the proprietor of the bank, or main, upon which the alluvion is thrown, and from which the water has receded. If the island be formed in the centre of the river, and there be depth of water on each

side of it sufficient for boats to ply, in this case it becomes the joint property of the chiefs on both banks. This custom which obtains in the Sikh states, with regard to alluvion, is universal in India, wherever lands are liable to such accident by an alteration in the course of rivers. In the case of lands cast by the change of the stream from one side of the river to the other, though one chief gains, and another loses, yet it is customary to preserve the rights of the zemindar, if he consent to cultivate the lands. The decided enmity of two chiefs is seldom a bar to an arrangement, in which each finds or perceives an advantage to himself, either immediate or prospective; for streams in India are so subject to change, that the land lost one rainy season may be regained in the next, or even in the cold weather, when the river falls and the floods cease.

Water-Courses.—The use and abuse of the ancient privilege of the zemindars, in damming up and turning the course of a stream into artificial *khools* or cuts, for the purpose of irrigating the lands in its vicinity, causes disputes and bloodshed;

and after much angry dissension, the result is generally a compromise, stipulating for a reciprocal enjoyment of the gifts of nature. In some instances, and in contiguous estates, the parties will agree to take equal shares of the water, either by the hour or the day, or by measurement; in other cases, one will receive two-thirds, and his neighbour one-third only, according to their respective and pressing wants. The landholders, whose possessions are adjacent to the hills, from which, and their base, these streams and springs take their rise, require and demand a very large portion of the water for their rice lands, into which it is diverted by numberless water-courses, drawn with great ingenuity by the cultivators into distant and countless parterres. Those who hold land at a distance, and lower down the river, in the more arid districts, are querulous that the streams do not flow unobstructed in their natural course, which would give them the unabsorbed portion to irrigate their wheat and barley crops.

It seems to be a question how far a chief

may be justified in entirely obstructing the course of a natural stream, and in appropriating the waters to his own exclusive advantage, to the serious detriment and loss of his neighbours, whose rights he may seem bound to respect, so far as they have relation to property. On the whole, it appears most just, that all should partake, as far as circumstances will admit, of a share in the water of a natural stream, or rivulet, and that when the absolute wants of those on the upper part of the stream have been supplied, the surplus should be again turned into, and permitted to flow in, its bed, to satisfy others lower down, whether for irrigation, or the consumption of the people and cattle in the arid districts. The lesser currents do not swell in the hot months, as is the case with the larger rivers which debouche from the Himalaya, and are fed in warm weather by the liquefaction of the snow: the supply of water in them is hence often so scanty, as scarcely to administer to the necessities of those near their heads, whilst the distress of others farther down the stream induces them

to become more clamorous as the quantity decreases, and ultimately stops short of them.

Bunds, or dams, are always constructed after the rains have ceased, to raise the water to a level with the surface, and to render it applicable to the purposes of irrigation; were a total prohibition of this beneficial practice to be enacted, large tracts on many estates, through which streams flow in deep channels, would become uncultivated, and the villages depopulated, to the serious loss of the proprietors, and the ruin of their zemindars. With the view of relieving the deficiencies experienced from the want of the fluid in the arid districts lower down, a substitute for the dam might be found in a hydraulic wheel, of simple construction, to draw the water to the level; and in places where the banks are comparatively low, it will only be necessary to dig the khool, or cut, for the reception and carriage of the water, deeper, and to raise it in the cut by sluice-boards. The churras, or leathern bags, in common use at wells, with a relief of bullocks, might also be serviceable in other

spots. All these expedients, however, fall very short of the utility and cheapness of the dams, when water requires to be conveyed many miles, and every khool is a canal in miniature.

Marriages.—Nuptial contracts are made in early youth by the parents or nearest of kin, who, in too many cases, are influenced more by pecuniary and sordid motives, than by the welfare of the children. Disagreements are very common relative to betrothments (*mungnee*), and to breaches of a promise of marriage (*nata* or *nisbut*), amongst all classes of the inhabitants. In some instances, real or imaginary diseases, or bodily defects, will be alleged, by one of the contracting parties, as a reason why the bargain should be annulled; in others, a flaw in the caste, and in most a discovery that the girl had been promised to two, three, or four different families, from all of which the needy parents or guardians had received money, ornaments, or clothes. If both parties be the subjects of one chief, they appear before him, and either he, or his officer, satisfies them, or refers the decision

to a Punchayet of the same class as the disputants. If the complainant and defendant happen to reside in separate jurisdictions, and either of the chiefs persevere in evading a compliance with the rule in such cases, or reject the award of a Punchayet, *gaha*, or self-indemnification, is adopted by the opposite party, and the subjects, property, and cattle of his neighbour are picked up and detained until satisfaction be offered and procured. The other side issues its letters of marque, and this pernicious system is frequently carried to the commission of serious outrage, and to infractions of the public tranquillity.*

It is not a rare occurrence for a parent or a guardian to be convicted of marrying a girl to one man after her betrothment to another. The chief, or a Punchayet, in general, in such cases, gives a verdict that the plaintiff is entitled to a female from the

* A demand was made on the state of Putteala, by a subject of the Naba Rajah, for the price of a buffalo, valued at fifteen rupees, but which, on the settlement of the account by reprisal, exceeded 900. Between the same states, and by the same system, one rupee accumulated in a few years to 1,500.

family; and, if there be not one, the parents or guardian must find a substitute; or, as a last expedient, to which the injured party very unwillingly assents, the money he may have expended, or a trifle in excess with interest, is decreed to be restored to him, that he may find a spouse elsewhere.

Amongst all the Jat families,* and some others of the lower classes in the Punjab, a custom prevails, on the demise of one brother, leaving a widow, for a surviving brother to take his sister-in-law to wife by *kurawa* or *chadurdula.* The offspring by the connection are legitimate, and entitled to succeed to a share of all landed and personal property.†

It is optional with the widow to take

* Intermarriages between the Jat Sikh chiefs and the Aloowalea and Ramgurhea families do not obtain, the latter being kubals and thokas (mace-bearers and carpenters), and deemed inferior.

† The present Rajah of Naba, Juswunt Singh, and six of the Singh-Poorea chiefs, are by a connubial union of this nature. Maha Raja Runjeet Singh went some steps further: he took by kurawa a lady betrothed to his father, Maha Singh: he also took Dya Koonwur and Rutun Koonwur, the widows of Saheb Singh, the chief of Goojrat, his own uncle-in-law.

either the eldest (*jeth*) or the youngest, who is generally preferred and deemed most suitable. Should she determine to relinquish worldly ideas, and to reside chaste in her father-in-law's house, she may adopt this course; but such instances are very rare, particularly in the case of young females, and are not to be looked for in a society, and amongst tribes, notorious for the laxity of their morals and for the degeneracy of their conceptions.

In default of surviving brothers, and in accordance with acknowledged usage, the widow is at the disposal of her father-in-law's family. From the moment she has quitted the paternal roof, she is considered to have been assigned as the property of another, and ceases to have a free will. Where the hymeneal bond is so loosely and irrationally knit, it is not a matter of surprise, that the feeble tie and servile obligation, which unite the wife to the husband, should make but an insincere and heartless impression. Females are daily accused, before chiefs and their officers, of breaches of conjugal virtue, and of having absconded to

evade the claims of a father, or mother-in-law, or the established rights of a *jeth*, or a *daiwar*. When they have fled into the territory of another chief, it is often difficult to obtain their restitution; but the solicitations of a Punchayet, and the more forcible argument of reprisals, are in the end efficacious, and the unfortunate woman, if she do not in a fit of desperation take opium, or cast herself into a well, is necessitated to submit to the law of the land, which she will again violate on the first opportune occasion. A sense of shame, or feeling of honour, has no place in the breast of a Jat,* and the same may be said of men of other low tribes. They will make strenuous exertions for recovery of their wives, after they have absconded, and will take them back as often as they can get them, bickering even for the children the women may have had by her paramour, as some recompense for her tem-

* The old chief Tara Singh Ghyba often declared, that a Jat's nose reached to Multan, and that if he lost a part of it for any offence, there would still be enough remaining. Implying that he was a stranger to shame and could survive disgrace.

porary absence, and for the expense and trouble they have incurred in the search for her.*

Debtors and Defaulters.—Debtors and revenue defaulters who abscond, and find protection in a foreign state, are seldom demanded, and, if demanded, never surrendered by even the most petty chief. The promise is made, that, when the delinquent has the means, he shall discharge whatever sum may appear, on a scrutiny into his accounts, to be fairly due by him. It is not uncommon for a deputation, composed of the heads, or of some respectable inhabitants, of a town or village, from which a person has removed, to proceed and wait upon the chief with whom a fugitive may find an asylum, and, entering into stipulations for his personal safety, to receive him back, if he be willing to return.

Endowments.—In the Sikh states there are no compulsory laws for raising money for the relief of the indigent. Most fakirs belong to a *punt*, or sect, and each sect has

* Law of Moses, Deuteronomy, chap. xxiii. vv. 15 and 16.

its temples, which are endowed with lands and villages (termed *oordoo* and *poora*) by the chiefs, and to which *churhawa*, or offerings of grain and money, are made by its votaries. An eleemosynary establishment is sometimes founded, in places of great resort, by chiefs and wealthy natives, and named *suda-birt*, at which every stranger is entertained for a certain number of days, and fed gratis. Every Hindu temple has its muhunt or head, to whom are attached his immediate chelas or followers, who parade the country, towns, and villages, asking or demanding charity, which forms the support of their superior and themselves, and is freely distributed to the needy stranger and weary traveller, who may stop at their gate, or desire a lodging and a meal within the courts of the thakoor-dwara.

The Musulman classes have their pirzadas, who make their rounds amongst their mooreeds, or disciples, and receive from them such *neeaz*, or offerings, as they can afford, or may choose to present. Since the decline of the Mahomedan, and the rise and establishment of the Sikh power, the pirzadas

have to lament the loss in many instances, and the diminution in others, of their village endowments. They still retain, however, a portion of the lands they held during the reigns of the emperors of Delhi, attached to their principal *rozas*, tombs, or seminaries; but the rents from them, and the trifle given in neeaz, are barely sufficient to maintain themselves and families in respectable circumstances, and to support the khadims, or servitors, in constant attendance at the tombs of their saints.

Mendicants.—Every village, independent of the fixed dues to the blacksmith, carpenter, washerman, to choomars and sweepers, has its *mulha*, or incidental expenses, charged on its cultivators, for what are termed *aya*, *gya*, or grain, ghee, &c. given to wandering fakirs and needy passengers. The punch, or heads of the villages, who supply the mulha, collect it in cash from the villagers twice during the year, and it not unfrequently gives rise to altercation and dispute, from the real or supposed inclination of the punch to impose upon them, under the specious

and pious name of charity, much of which finds its way into the collector's own pocket.

Hindu and Musulman fakirs are found located in and around every town and village, and each has his tukeeah, or place of abode, to which a few bigahs of land are assigned, the gift of the zemindars, who, in other respects, also, take care of the common holy fraternity, that their blessing may continue to be upon them.

Land Revenue.—The *jinsee*, or grain lands, are cessed by the *kun* (appraisement), or the *butaee* (division of the produce in the field); both are exceptionable. It requires a very discerning and experienced man to estimate the quantity in a field of standing grain. In some it is over, and in others under rated. The *butaee* is detailed and tedious; an establishment also is required to watch the different *kulwara*, or heaps of grain, on the field. Cultivators are apt to steal it during the night, and in stormy and wet weather, much of it is damaged ere it can be housed. It is a common saying, "*Butaee lootaee*," or '*butaee* is plunder.' Some chiefs exact a half

of the produce, others two-fifths, and a few, one-fourth. Sugar-cane, cotton, poppy, indigo, and all the lands under the denomination of *zubtee*, are assessed at fixed rates, and the rent is received in cash.

In the Sikh states, the lands of most towns and villages are parcelled out into puttees, turufs, or divisions, amongst the punch, or zemindars, who are answerable for the sirkar's or ruler's share. In some, where there are no ostensible heads, the lands are held by *hulsaree*, or ploughs. Thus, if in a village society, there be twenty-five ploughs, and 2,500 bigahs, the jinsee and zubtee lands are equalized amongst the asamees, or husbandmen, which gives 100 bigahs to each plough, and each asamee pays his own rent, much on the principle of a ryotwar settlement. In general, the punch hold a few bigahs, and also the *puchotrah* (5 per cent.) on the net collections, in Inaum.

The system of assessment by the *kun* or *butaee* pleases the agricultural community, and the chiefs, who pay their armed retainers and establishments every six months in kind, with a small sum in cash, called *poshakee*, or

clothing: it also accords with their internal plan of management. On some small estates, with comparatively few followers, it works well, but it is not at all adapted to extended territory and great governments.*

Taxes.—The chief sources of oppression on the people, under Sikh rule, emanate, 1st, from the exaction of the *siwaee-juma*, or extraordinary imposts, levied in cash on every village, under the general head of the *huq-huboobnuzurbhét*, and branching out into a variety of names; 2nd, the inhuman practice of *kar-begar*, or the impress of labour of the inhabitants without recompense; and 3rd, the violence to which they are exposed from licentious armed dependants, quartered in the forts and towers which cover the country, and prey on the villages.

Every major and minor chief exercises the privilege by prescription of taxing trade; yet the duties, though levied at every ten to

* Runjeet Singh, when urged by his officers to abandon the farming system, and introduce the *kun* and *butaee*, always replied, "that he could not give his time and attention to the weighing and housing of grain."

twenty miles, are light. A practice called *hoonda-bara* prevails in the mercantile community. A trader gives over charge of his caravan of goods to a Nanukputra, who engages to convey it for a stipulated sum from Jughadri to Amritsur, the emporium of the Sikh states, paying all the duties. The Nanukputras, from the sanctity which attaches to their persons, as the descendants of Nanuk, the founder of the Sikh faith, enjoy certain exemptions, and are less subject to molestation from custom-house importunity than others. Bēema, or insurance, may be had at a cheap rate from the Nouhureea merchants to all parts of India. Should any grievous or vexatious tax be imposed on the trade by a chief, he suffers an alienation of this branch of his revenue, by the route being changed through the possessions of another, who has the power to protect, and the inclination to encourage, the transit of traffic through his domains.*

* Runjeet Singh became anxious to establish a copper mint at Amritsur, and prohibited the importation of pice from Jughadri. The merchants of Jughadri retaliated,

Suttees.—Sikh women do not usually burn with the corpses of their husbands. An exception occurred in 1805, in the town of Booreeah, on the death of the chief, Rae Singh, when his widow made a voluntary sacrifice of herself, rejecting a handsome provision in land. A more recent example (in 1839) occurred on the death of Runjeet Singh, when there were many suttees: the increase of the practice may be one symptom, amongst many, of the gradual inroads of Hinduism upon the Sikh institutions. There exists no prohibition against the suttee. In all cases they are understood to be willing victims, and much real or pretended dissuasion is exercised by the public functionaries, and by friends and relations, to divert the miserable creature from her destructive intentions. That affection and duty have not always place in this class of *felo de se*, which would explain and

taliated, and withheld the exportation of copper from their town, and gained their point.

The Rajah of Puteala has attempted to raise the duties in trade, and failed, from his territory being avoided.

extenuate such a deed, and convert the offspring of superstition into a noble act of self-devotion, is obvious from the frequency of suttee, and from the fact that it is not only the favoured wife, but a whole host of females, that sometimes are offered up to blaze on the pyre of their deceased lord.*

In most cases of suttee, it will generally be observed, that a slow, reluctant promise has been exacted from, or made by, the wretched woman in an unguarded moment, when under the impulse of grief.† A multi-

* This allusion is made to the frightful scenes which occurred on the demise of the hill rajahs of Kulu, Nahun, Juswoul, and other places.

† In 1826, after the domain of Umbala lapsed to the East-India Company, a very young Bramin woman heard of the demise of her husband in a foreign land, and expressed a determination to immolate herself with part of his clothes. A concourse of people instantly gathered around her, and the utmost excitation prevailed. Being absent at the time, the office moonshi, the thanadar of Umbala, and the soobadar on duty, all three Hindus of high caste, took upon themselves the task and responsibility of preventing the sacrifice, dispersed the multitude, and induced the young creature to await a reply to the express they had despatched to me. A threat to confine and prosecute all instigators, and a pension of three rupees per month, saved the Bramini, and she survives, honoured in her

family

tude is immediately assembled round her dwelling and person; clamour and precipitancy succeed, no time is permitted for reflection; honour, shame, and duty, all now combine to strengthen her bloody resolution, and the scene is hurried through and closed.

family and respected in society as a living suttee, totally falsifying the current belief, that recantation brings disgrace, scorn, and contempt. On the demise of the hill rajas of Belaspore and Nahun, in 1824 and 1827, there was no suttee, and the practice has disappeared in the hill states under the protection of British government.

CHAPTER VII.*

HISTORY OF THE SIKH NATION.

A.D. 1707 TO 1761.

THE empire founded in Hindustan by Baber, and supported by the vigour and abilities of several generations of celebrated princes, fell speedily to dissolution after the accession of Mahomed Shah. The invasion of Nadir Shah gave a violent shock to its stability, which was already undermined by the growing power of the Mahrattas; and the inroads of the Abdali, Ahmed Shah, though made in support of the faith of Mahomed, and successful in checking that reaction of Hindu vigour which threatened at the time to

* This chapter is entirely from Captain Murray, who has the merit of being the first to collect and put together in a consistent narrative the loose fragments and materials that exist, in respect to the events in the Punjab at this period.—*Note by Mr. Prinsep.* The events of the Sikh history between 1707 and 1742 have been added by the present editor.

overwhelm it, accelerated, nevertheless, the fall of the house of Timur, which he uniformly treated with neglect and humiliation. The court of Delhi ceased thenceforward to be looked up to as the source of protection, of honours, or of punishments. The satraps and officers, nominally acting under its authority, assumed everywhere independence; the provinces were dismembered, and a spirit of disaffection was roused in all parts of the empire. The history of Hindustan ceases from this period to be that of any ruling dynasty, and must be traced in the detail of the events of each province, and in the transactions, by which the several nawabs, rajas, and princes,—the sects, nations, or associations of chiefs,—rose, each in turn, to power, in displacement of the royal authority, and in successful rivalry with one another.

The confusion which took place in the Indian provinces on the death of Aurungzeb, in 1707, was favourable to the designs of Banda, whose grief at the fate of Guru Govind is said by Sikh authors to have settled into a gloomy and desperate resolution to

avenge his wrongs. The severities which had been inflicted upon the Sikhs, instead of crushing them, exalted their fanaticism, whilst they extinguished the humane and merciful feelings which Nanuk had laboured to instil. After plundering the country, and defeating most of the petty Mahomedan chiefs that were opposed to him in the Punjab, Banda thought himself sufficiently strong to contend in a pitched battle with Foujdar Khan, the governor of the province of Sirhind, a man abhorred by the Sikhs, as the murderer of the infant children of Guru Govind. The Mahomedans fought with valour, the Sikhs with all the desperation which the most savage spirit of revenge could inspire; and this, aided by the courage and conduct of their leader, gave them the victory, after a severe contest. Foujdar Khan fell, with most of his army; the enraged Sikhs gave no quarter, nor was their thirst for vengeance satiated by the destruction of the Mahomedan soldiers; they put to death the wife and children of Vizir Khan (who was concerned in the murder of Govind's family), and almost all the inhabitants of

Sarhind

Sirhind. They destroyed, or polluted, the mosques of that city; butchered the mullahs, and, in the madness of their rage, dug up the carcases of the dead, and exposed them to be devoured by birds and beasts of prey. These acts of cruelty were almost entirely confined to the Mahomedans.*

Encouraged by this success, and hardened by the example and lessons of Banda to deeds of atrocity, the Sikhs rushed forward and subdued all the country eastward between the Sutluj and the Jumna; and, crossing this river, made inroads into the province of Saharanpur. This memorable incursion appears to have been one of the severest scourges with which any country was afflicted. Every excess that the most wanton barbarity could commit, every cruelty that an unappeased appetite of revenge could suggest, was perpetrated upon the miserable inhabitants of the provinces through which the exasperated fanatics passed. Life was

* The *Seir Mutakhareen* contains terrible details of the atrocious deeds of the Sikhs; but a Mahomedan writer (though Gholam Huseen is generally faithful) is not to be implicitly trusted upon such a point.

only granted to those who conformed to the religion, and adopted the habits and dress, of the Sikhs; and if the Emperor Bahadur Shah had not quitted the Deccan, which he did in A.D. 1710, there is reason to think the whole of Hindustan would have been subdued by these merciless invaders.

The first check the Sikhs received was from an army under Sultan Kuli Khan. That chief defeated at Paniput one of their advanced corps, which, after being dispersed, fled to the country on the upper course of the Sutluj, between Lodiana and the mountains, from whence they soon after issued, and joined Banda at Sirhind, who ravaged the country as far as Lahore on one side and Delhi on the other.

Bahadur Shah now proceeded against the Sikhs in person. He drove them into the hills, and besieged Banda in the strong fort of Daber, at the entrance of the hills, which could only be reduced by famine. A strict blockade was kept up; the Sikhs endured the extremity of famine; vast numbers died, but Banda persisted in holding the fort till resistance was hopeless; when he made a

desperate sally and escaped to the mountains with his principal followers. A Hindu convert, who had favoured the escape of Banda, by pretending to be that leader, was taken prisoner, and sent to Delhi inclosed in an iron cage. After the capture of Daber, the emperor returned to Lahore.

The death of Bahadur Shah, in 1712, prevented, perhaps, the extermination of the sect, and the confusion and dissensions in the empire which followed that event were favourable to the Sikhs, by allowing them to recruit their strength. Banda issued from his retreat in the hills, and defeated Islam Khan, the viceroy of Lahore, and the foujdar or chief of Sirhind, who had marched out of that town to encounter them, was assassinated in his tent by one of these fanatics. The Sikhs now ravaged the level country with greater fury than before. At length, in 1716, Abdul Samad Khan, governor of Cashmere, a general of great reputation, was despatched, with a large army, by the Emperor Farokhseir, against the heretics, whom he worsted in several actions, and finally defeated in a very desperate engagement, in

which Banda performed prodigies of valour, but was obliged to give way to the superior number and discipline of the imperialists. The Sikhs, unable to make a stand after this defeat, were hunted, like wild beasts, from one stronghold to another, by the army of the emperor, and their leader and his most devoted followers were at last taken, after having suffered the extremes of hunger and fatigue.

Abdul Samad Khan put to death great numbers of the Sikhs, after the surrender of Lohgud, the fortress in which they took refuge; but sent Banda and the principal chiefs of the tribe, with 740 others, to Delhi, where they were paraded through the streets on camels, dressed in black sheep-skins with the wool outside (in derision of the shaggy appearance they affected), and after experiencing every kind of insult, amid the maledictions of the populace, they were beheaded on seven successive days. A Mahomedan writer* attests the intrepidity with which these Sikh prisoners, but particularly their leader Banda, met death. "It is

* The author of the *Seir Mutakhareen*.

singular," he writes, "that these people not only behaved firmly during the execution, but they would dispute and wrangle with each other who should suffer first, and they made interest with the executioner to obtain the preference." Banda was reserved till the last. He was exhibited in an iron cage, clad in a robe of cloth of gold and a scarlet turban, an executioner standing behind him with a drawn sword. Around him were the heads of his followers on pikes, and on one pike a dead cat was fixed. When the moment of execution arrived, with a refinement of cruelty, Banda's infant son was placed in his lap, and he was ordered to cut its throat, and upon his refusing,* the child was butchered before him, and its heart cast into his face. The flesh of Banda was then torn off with red-hot pincers till he expired, "glorying," say the Sikh writers, "in having been raised up by God to be a scourge to the wicked;" whereas, according to Gholam Huseen, "his black soul took its flight to the regions of hell."

"Thus," says Sir John Malcolm, "perished

* Some accounts say that he stabbed the child.

Banda, who, though a brave and able leader, was one of the most cruel and ferocious of men, and endeavoured to impart to his followers that feeling of merciless resentment which he cherished against the whole Mahomedan race, whom he appears to have thought accountable for the cruelty and oppression of a few individuals of the persuasion."

Though the Sikhs, being animated by a similar feeling, and encouraged by his first successes, followed Banda to the field, his memory is not revered, and he is termed, by some of their authors, a heretic, who, intoxicated with victory, endeavoured to change the religious institutions and laws of Guru Govind, many of whose most devoted followers he put to death, because they refused to depart from those usages which that revered spiritual leader had taught them to consider sacred. Among other changes, Banda wished to make the Sikhs abandon their blue dress, to refrain from eating flesh, and, instead of exclaiming, "*Wah! Guruji ki Fateh! Wah! Khalaii ki Fateh!*" the salutations directed by Go-

vind, he directed them to exclaim "*Fateh D'herm! Fateh Dersan!*" which means, "Success to piety! success to the sect!" These innovations were very generally resisted, but the dreaded severity of Banda made many conform to them. The class of Akalis, who had been established by Guru Govind, continued to oppose the innovations with great obstinacy, and many of them suffered martyrdom, rather than change either their mode of salutation, diet, or dress; and at the death of Banda, all the institutions of Guru Govind were restored; but the blue dress, instead of being, as at first, worn by all, appears, from that date, to have become the particular distinction of the Akalis.

After the defeat and death of Banda, every measure was taken that an active resentment could suggest, not only to destroy the power of the Sikhs, but to extirpate the sect. An astonishing number must have fallen in the last two or three years of the contest with the imperial armies, as the irritated Mahomedans gave them no quarter; and after the execution of their chief, a

royal edict was issued, ordering all who professed the religion of Nanuk to be taken and put to death wherever found. A reward was offered for the head of every Sikh; and all Hindus were ordered to shave their hair off, under pain of death. The few Sikhs that escaped this general execution fled into the mountains to the north-east of the Punjab, where they found a refuge from the persecution, while numbers, abandoning the outward usages of their religion, satisfied their consciences with the secret practice of its rites.

From the defeat and death of Banda till the invasion of India by Nadir Shah, a period of nearly thirty years, we hear nothing of the Sikhs; but when, on the decay of authority in the empire, that conqueror had possessed himself of Lahore and Delhi, in 1739, they are stated to have taken advantage of the confusion he created, and fallen upon the peaceable inhabitants of the Punjab, who sought shelter in the hills, and to have plundered them of that property which they were endeavouring to secure from the rapacity of the Persian invader. Enriched with these spoils, the Sikhs left their fast-

nesses in the hills, and built the fort of Dalewal, on the Ravi, from whence they made predatory incursions, and are said to have harassed and plundered Nadir Shah's army, on its return to Persia, encumbered with spoil.

In 1742, Yuhea Khan, the son of Zukarea Khan, commonly styled Khan Bahadur, held the viceroyalty of Lahore, when the Jat zemindars of the Punjab, impoverished by long extortion, and driven at last to desperation, took to rapine and plunder for the support of themselves and families, and as a bond of union and excitement against their oppressors, revived in their customs and ceremonies the latent flame of the Sikh ritual. They proclaimed the faith and tenets of Govind Singh, the last acknowledged Guru, or spiritual guide of the Sikhs, and took the *pahal* of initiation into the mysteries of that religion. The long hair on the head and flowing beard, the entire renunciation of tobacco, and the use of the audible salutation of "*Wah Guruji ki Fateh,*" proclaimed that the ploughshare had been exchanged for the avenger's sword, and that the maxims and

precepts of the *Grant'h* of Guru Govind had prevailed over the more peaceable doctrines of the *Vedas* and *Shastras* of pure Hinduism. The spirit of the revived sect displayed itself at first in secret associations and isolated acts of depredation. Bodies of armed men, in tens and twenties, called *dharwee* in the dialect of the province, that is, highwaymen, infested the routes of communication, attacked villages, or plundered in towns, according as their local connections invited to either mode of seeking wealth or the means of support. The early neglect of the ruling authority enabled the associations to prosper, and the most successful chiefs purchased horses with the proceeds of their spoil, and mounted and armed their followers. Their example and success made the cause popular with the young and adventurous, so that the number who took to these courses augmented daily, until the chiefs formed their respective *dehras*, or encampments, in open defiance of the ruling authority, and sought celebrity by bold and hardy enterprises, which gave security in the awe they inspired, while the wealth and reputa-

tion resulting afforded the means of further strengthening themselves. The distractions of the Mogul empire, and the intrigues and imbecility of the vice-regal court at Lahore, gave encouragement to the system pursued, not only by neglecting to punish, but by the occasional employment of the services of individual chiefs, so that many of them assumed an organized martial appearance, and, not content with ravaging the open country, approached the sacred reservoir of the Sikhs at Amritsur, and maintained themselves in that vicinity. The different associations were united by common interest, no less than by the profession of a new faith; and a system of general confederation for defence, or for operations requiring more than single efforts, was early arranged between the chiefs.

The evil had spread and had acquired some head before the attention of the Governor, Yuhea Khan, was sufficiently roused to induce him to make an exertion to put it down. At length, however, his revenue failing from these disorders, he sent out a small detachment of government troops under command

of Jusput Rae, brother of his dewan or prime minister, Lukhput Rae. They proceeded first against a body of insurgent Sikhs, who were devastating the country and driving off the flocks and herds in the vicinity of Yumeenabad, which lies to the north of Lahore. The detachment was overpowered, and Jusput Rae being slain, his men dispersed. Lukhput Rae, dewan, however, hastened from Lahore to avenge his brother's death, and the insurgents retreated before him into the north-eastern corner of the Punjab, where he inflicted on them a severe chastisement. The dewan brought back with him many prisoners, whose heads were struck off without remorse in the Ghora-Nukhas, or horse-market, outside the city wall of Lahore. The spot is now called by the Sikhs *Shuheed-gunj*, 'the place of martyrs,' in memory of this event, and a *sumadh*, or tomb, has been erected there in honour of the Bhae Jaroo Singh, which marks the site. After this success, a proclamation was issued in the name of the Governor, Yuhea Khan, denouncing death to all persons who invoked the name of Guru Govind, and a reward was

offered for the heads of his disciples. This rigour and summary proscription checked the progress of Sikh proselytism, and the enthusiasm of the votaries of the Guru was considerably diminished. Many cut their long hair and curtailed their flowing beards to avoid detection and death, and others fled across the Sutluj into the adjoining province of Sirhind, where they found protection or concealment in the wide wastes which lie to the west of Puteala and Naba.

Not long after this event, the younger brother of Yuhea Khan, named Shah Nuwaz Khan, rose in insurrection against him, and succeeded in establishing himself in the two provinces of Lahore and Multan, making prisoner Yuhea Khan, with all his state officers. He nominated a Hindu, named Kaonra Mul, to be dewan in lieu of Lukhput Rae, but left Adena Beg Khan, who had risen under his father Zukarea Khan, and governed with much vigour the difficult district of the Jalendra Doab, in both civil and military charge of that tract. Yuhea Khan escaped from Lahore, and hastening to Delhi, laid his complaint before the Vuzeer, his uncle,

Kumur-ud-deen Khan, who was at the same time privately informed that Shah Nuwaz Khan, in fear of the consequences of his act, had opened a correspondence with Ahmed Shah Abdali. The Shah had recently seized Cabul and Peshawur, ejecting the Delhi soobahdar, Nasir Khan, an event that had excited much alarm at the capital. The Vuzeer, availing himself of his relationship, appealed to his nephew's sense of honour, and addressed to him a strong remonstrance on his defection from allegiance, desiring him not to seek the degradation of serving Ahmed, the *yusoul* or mace-bearer of Nadir, but to be faithful to the hereditary sovereign of his family and race. The young man's pride was touched, and although doubtful what might be the issue of the complaint of his elder brother, he prepared himself to oppose the advance of the Duranis, and withdrew from further correspondence with Ahmed Shah. Undeterred by this change of councils, the Abdali crossed the Indus near the fort of Attock, in the year 1747, and sent his domestic priest, Sabir Shah, in advance, to Lahore, hoping through his negotia-

tions or intrigues to bind Shah Nuwaz Khan to his first offers, or at all events to secure a friendly reception to his army. Shah Nuwaz, however, was now stanch in his allegiance to Delhi, and placed himself in the best posture of defence his scanty means would permit. He further gave to his court a pledge of fidelity by causing the agent of the Abdali to be murdered. Ahmed Shah was greatly incensed at this violence done to the person of his ambassador and confidential servant, and crossing the Ravi, marched immediately to attack Shah Nuwaz Khan in the intrenched position he had taken up under the walls of Lahore. The resistance offered was slight; the defences were soon mastered by the Durani warriors; Shah Nuwaz fled to Delhi; the city of Lahore was shortly after reduced, and its resources fell a prey to the Abdali, who raised there a heavy contribution.

Ahmed Shah, when at Delhi in the train of Nadir Shah, had not been an inattentive observer of the state of things at that court. The imbecility of Mahomed Shah, the over-grown power, discords, and intrigues of the

great ameers, or grandees, and the little obedience paid to the royal authority, at the capital as well as in the interior, had not failed to attract his attention, and the confusion likely to follow the departure of the invading army afforded matter of speculation for an ambitious man seeking to push his own fortune. The unparalleled success which had attended his first efforts in Afghanistan, and the advantage to which he systematically turned his present means in laying the foundation of future grandeur, encouraged him to hope, from what he saw and heard of the condition of things at Delhi, that the time was favourable for an attempt to erect for himself an empire on the ruins of that of the house of Timur. Having mastered Lahore, therefore, he determined on an immediate advance towards Delhi, and crossing the Beas and Sutluj without opposition, he approached Sirhind.

The Vuzeer Kumur-ud-deen Khan was not deficient in energy, and made preparation to meet the invader. Calling out the principal chiefs of Rajpootana, with their respective quotas, he placed the king's eldest

son, Prince Ahmed, in nominal command, and with this force, and the troops at the capital, took up an intrenched position at the village of Munupore, nine miles from Sirhind. The Abdali Shah, having reconnoitred the position, deemed himself too weak to attempt a storm of the works. Encamping in the neighbourhood, therefore, he directed his efforts against the supplies of the Delhi army, and sent detachments to cut off convoys and intercept the communications with the capital. This led to continual skirmishes and partial engagements, which amused both armies for a month, without producing any thing decisive. An event, however, then occurred, which brought about an immediate change in the aspect of things. The Vuzeer was killed whilst at evening prayers, by a random shot from the Durani artillery, and from that time forward there ceased to be any commander-in-chief in the Delhi camp. The Rajpoot chiefs, who had come upon his invitation, and were held together by his influence and reputation, feeling confidence in no other leader, began to desert the royal standard, and retired to

their respective estates. The Abdali, hearing of this, deemed the moment favourable to assume the offensive, and ordered an attack, notwithstanding the inferiority of his numbers. A panic seized the imperial army, and disorder began to spread in the camp. Meer Munoo, however, son of the deceased Vuzeer, at the critical moment, brought a body of fresh troops to the points assailed, led them himself to the charge, and repulsed the Duranis, with considerable slaughter; so that Ahmed Shah deemed it necessary to relinquish his designs for the present, and retired precipitately across the Punjab, in order to repair his losses. His retreat was unmolested, and he recrossed the Attock, without making any effort to maintain his footing at Lahore. The Punjab was thus recovered for the Mogul, and the government of Lahore and Multan was conferred by the Delhi court on Meer Munoo, with the title of Mooyyun-ul-Moolk, in reward and acknowledgment of his service on this important occasion.

The invasion of the Abdali, and the occupation of the forces on both sides in the

struggle for empire on the plains of Sirhind, were favourable to the further rise of the Sikhs, whose depredations were, for the interval, unchecked, and who again shewed themselves by day, and ventured even to satisfy their religious prejudices, by stolen visits to the shrines of their faith at Amritsur. According to a contemporary Mahomedan author, they were often slain in these attempts, seeking, rather than avoiding, on such occasions, the crown of martyrdom. He adds, that "an instance was never known of a Sikh, taken on his way to Amritsur, consenting to abjure his faith." The new governor of Lahore, Meer Munoo, confirmed Kaonra Mul* in the office of dewan, and found the disorders created by these associations, and by fanatics of the sect, who sprung up in numbers, to be one of the first objects requiring his attention. A small party of Sikhs had the audacity to throw up a mud work, which they called Ram-Rouni (since

* According to Sir John Malcolm, Kaonra Mul (or, as he calls him, Koda Mul) was secretly a Khalasa Sikh, a sect who believe in the *Adi Grant'h*, but do not conform to the institutions of Guru Govind.

enlarged, and now called Ramghur), in the district and immediate vicinity of Amritsur, and Sikh plunderers scoured the Bari and Jalendra doabs, making incursions into the neighbouring countries in all directions. Meer Munoo surrounded and captured Ram-Rouni, and stationed detachments to preserve the peace of the country, who had orders to detain all Sikhs, and to shave their heads and beards. By these energetic measures the public confidence was restored; the Sikhs were again compelled to fly the country, or hide their heads, and proselytes to their faith and habits became more rare.

Ahmed Shah Abdali had retired only to recruit his strength, and was by no means inclined to relinquish his designs on Hindustan. In the season following that of his first invasion, that is, after the close of the rains of 1748, he again crossed the Indus, and interrupted all Meer Munoo's plans for establishing himself in his government, and better ordering its administration. Being apprehensive that his force was too weak to resist the invader, he applied to Delhi for reinforcements; and in order to gain time,

sent a mission to the Abdali camp, to offer terms of compromise, and negotiate for the Shah's retirement. He followed up this measure by himself moving out of Lahore, and pitched his camp at Soudhura, on the south bank of the Chenab. This state of preparation, and the known character of the Lahore viceroy, deterred the Abdali, for the time, from attempting to force his way into Hindustan. He was content, therefore, to accept a promise of the revenue of the four districts, Pursuroor, Goojrat, Seal-Kot, and Aurungabad, which had formerly been assigned to Nadir Shah, and then retraced his steps to Cabul.

This success of Meer Munoo, and the credit resulting from it, excited envy in the grandees at Delhi, and, instead of meeting further reward from the court, an intrigue there deprived him of the government of Multan, which was conferred on Shah Nuwaz Khan. The viceroy in possession, however, was not of a temper to submit patiently to such supersession, and he detached his minister, Kaonra Mul, to oppose the new governor. Shah Nuwaz Khan advanced to

the frontier of Multan, with a force collected for the purpose of securing his investiture, but, finding himself overmatched, he could proceed no farther. For about six months he maintained himself on the frontier, without any thing decisive occurring, but at the end of that time he was induced to hazard a battle with the dewan, in which he was defeated and slain. Meer Munoo created Kaonra Mul raja for this service, and invested him with the subordinate charge of Multan and the adjoining districts.

As might be expected, Meer Munoo failed to remit to Cabul the revenues of the four districts stipulated, and the Abdali Ahmed Shah had thus a pretext for again crossing the Indus, which he did in the season 1751-2, and advanced to the right bank of the Chenab. Sookh Jeewun, a Hindu, was sent thence to Lahore, to demand the fulfilment of the engagement. Meer Munoo replied, that the promise had been made in the exigency of the moment, and he did not look upon himself as bound to abide by the strict letter, but free to act according to circumstances. He offered, however, to pay now

what might be due, upon the condition of the Durani army being immediately withdrawn. Not expecting this offer to be accepted, Meer Munoo called in Adena Beg Khan and Raja Kaonra Mul, with their respective forces, to Lahore, where an intrenched camp was prepared at Shahdurra, in the environs. He himself advanced to meet the Abdali, and retired before him as he moved eastward, until both chiefs approached Lahore, when the viceroy entered his intrenched position under the walls of the city. For four months he maintained himself in this post, and was proof against every endeavour of the Shah to entice him out of his intrenchment. The blockade maintained was, however, strict, and supplies then began wholly to fail. The only food or forage for the horses and ammunition-cattle consisted of chopped straw from the roofs of huts and bazars, and grain and flour were selling at an exorbitant price. A council of war was called in this emergency, when Adena Beg gave it as his opinion that, as no succour or reinforcement could be expected from Delhi, an action ought to be risked be-

fore their provisions wholly failed, as might be expected in a few days, if the blockade continued. Raja Kaonra Mul was opposed to this advice; he observed, that the viceroy's troops were mostly raw levies, who were no match in the field for the hardy veterans of the Shah; that the country for a wide space round had been foraged and wasted, and the distress for provisions was not less in the Durani camp than in their own; that in twenty days more, the hot weather would set in, when the northern troops of the Shah would find the sun and wind intolerable in the plains, and hence would be compelled to retreat or to attack them in their lines to disadvantage. The advice of the Hindu was prudent, but the viceroy was young, and, from the impatience and impetuosity of youth, the opinion of Adena Beg fell more in accordance with his disposition. Early in the morning, therefore, of the 12th of April, 1752, his army moved from its lines and took up ground on an elevated spot, marked by an old brick-kiln. The Shah prepared immediately for action. His artillery was ordered to advance, and a

cannonade was kept up between the two armies until the afternoon, when the Shah, observing some confusion, ordered a charge by a select body of cavalry, which was so far successful as to induce Meer Munoo to retire again within his intrenchments. In the retreat, Raja Kaonra Mul's elephant chanced to tread on an old grave, the earth of which sinking strained and nearly disabled the animal. Before the mahout could extricate him, the Raja was overtaken and slain by a Durani horseman, and his loss, when known in the intrenched camp, occasioned a panic and desertion so general, that the viceroy was compelled, by diminished numbers, to retire within the city wall. In this exigency Adena Beg Khan abruptly withdrew with his troops, and Meer Munoo, finding the fortifications of the city out of repair and untenable, was induced to yield to circumstances, and tendered his submission to the Shah. The Abdali was well pleased thus to close the campaign: he sent his principal officer, Juhan Khan, into the city to conduct the viceroy to his presence, and treated him with courtesy and respect, declaring his ad-

miration of the determined spirit, conduct, and deportment displayed by him on all occasions. He exacted a large sum of money from him for the expenses of the campaign, and then reinstated him as viceroy on his own part, both of Lahore and Multan.

Before retiring to his own dominions, Ahmed Shah determined on the occupation of Cashmere, and a strong detachment was sent thither under the command of Abdulla Khan, who succeeded in penetrating to the valley, and establishing the Shah's authority there without opposition. The Hindu, Sookh-Jeewun, a Khatri of Cabul, was selected for the government, and the rainy season being now near, the Shah re-crossed the Indus, and carried back his army to Cabul.

Meer Munoo did not long survive these events: he was killed by a fall from his horse, whereupon his widow, a woman of spirit and address, proclaimed her infant son successor in the viceroyalty, and succeeded in establishing an administration in his name. Before ten months had expired, however, the infant died of the small-pox. The Begum then proclaimed herself, and despatched

agents to Delhi and to Cabul to procure her acknowledgment. To the Vuzeer at Delhi her daughter was offered in marriage, and he came to the banks of the Sutluj to celebrate the nuptials. By these acts the Begum secured herself against present supersession.

A female viceroy was not likely to display much activity in suppressing associations like those of the Sikhs, which meddled not with her ease and pleasures at the seat of government. Their number and audacity accordingly increased rapidly, and bands of these bearded depredators were continually to be seen, traversing the various districts of the Punjab, sweeping off the flocks and herds, and laying waste the cultivation, unless redeemed by a prompt contribution. Disorder, anarchy, and confusion gained head in the province, as in all other parts of Hindustan.

It was not till after an interval of four years, that is, in the season 1755-6, that Ahmed Shah Abdali appeared again in the field. In all his previous incursions he had been met by the energy of the local governors, and the Delhi court had made efforts,

or at least had displayed some interest and anxiety, in checking his advance. On the present occasion, such was the condition of wreck and revolution to which the empire was reduced, that no one offered anywhere to impede his march, and he traversed the Punjab and entered even the imperial city without experiencing the smallest opposition. His detachments plundered Muttra, and threatened the city of Agra, and the Shah, having formed a matrimonial connection with the family of Timur, laid the capital under heavy contribution, and confiscated to his own use the property of the grandees and principal inhabitants. His cupidity being thus satisfied, he retired, leaving the throne of the Mogul in the same weak hands and helpless condition in which he found it. But he seized on the Punjab and Sirhind, and gave the government of both provinces to his son Timur, with whom he left his confidential officer Juhan Khan and a detachment of troops of no great strength, and then returned to Cabul.

Since the death of Meer Munoo, Adena Beg Khan had assumed entire independence

in his subordinate government in the Jalendra Doab, and had appropriated the revenues to his personal use. One of the first acts of the young Prince Timur was to summon this chief to Lahore, as a dependant of his government. The wary veteran, however, evaded prompt compliance, alleging the necessity of his presence in his districts to check the increasing audacity of the Sikhs, who were encamped in his vicinity, and, were he to desert his post, might secure a permanent hold in the country. The Afghan prince, not satisfied with this excuse, sent a detachment of his troops to seize Adena Beg; whereupon the latter strengthened himself by association with the Sikhs, of whom he took a considerable body into pay, and with them retired before the Afghans into the northern hills. Being now fully committed with the Duranis, his mind, fertile in resources, sought the means of succour and relief in a quarter, which would not readily have occurred to another. He applied to the Mahrattas, whose reputation for enterprise and daring adventure was then high, and whose chiefs were at the time encamped

near Delhi. He stipulated for the payment of a daily sum for their aid, and pointed out the rich harvest of spoil that was within their reach. The expedition was entered upon with alacrity, and Mulhar Rao Holkar, with some other chiefs of that nation, marched immediately for the Punjab, where they were joined, on passing the Sutluj, by Adena Beg, with a swarm of Sikh plunderers, and the whole advanced rapidly on Lahore. Prince Timur and Juhan Khan were unable to stem this torrent of invasion, and retired precipitately to the Indus. Their retreat was harassed by frequent attacks, and most of their baggage taken. The Mahrattas then overran the whole country; their main body returned to Delhi, but a detachment of this nation was left in the occupation of Lahore.

Adena Beg Khan did not long survive this event. He died in 1758, having latterly, and indeed for a very long time, played a very conspicuous part in the diplomacy of the Punjab and Hindustan. His address, experience, and extensive knowledge recommended him early to the notice of the viceroys who in succession ruled Lahore; under

them he rose through the gradations of office, until his services were at last recompensed by the delegated administration of a troublesome but very fertile region. He was a master of the arts and shifts of Indian diplomacy. The Sikhs he amused, and secured immunity from their depredations, by occasionally paying for their services, and he would even buy their forbearance when too weak to coerce them. He left no issue or successor to perpetuate his name and authority, but his memory lives in the Punjab, and he is respected even by the Sikhs as the last of the Mogul rulers in their country.

The Mahrattas were now the ruling power of Hindustan; their forces traversed the country, from the Deccan to the Indus and Himalayas, and no one ventured to take the field against them. The Musulman subahdars, who had asserted independence, in the decadence of the Mogul empire, trembled for their principalities, and seemed to have no alternative but submission, and the payment of *chout* (tribute) to this upstart Hindu sovereignty, or absolute extinction. In this state of things, the re-appearance of the

Abdali, Ahmed Shah, east of the Indus, was hailed by a large party in Hindustan, as a welcome succour. Shuja-ud-Doula, in Oude, the celebrated Nujeeb-ud-Doula, who governed Delhi and the Northern Doab, the Rohilla chiefs, and all the Mahomedan families settled in the Doab, or west of the Jumna, prepared to range themselves under the standard of the Shah, and to fight the great battle for their faith and independence under his leading. The Mahratta detachment retired before the Shah from Lahore to Delhi, pillaging and laying waste the country as they went. The fertile plains of Sirhind consequently exhibited an appearance of desolation, that induced the Abdali, as well for the convenience of obtaining supplies, as to unite with the Mahomedan chiefs of Hindustan, to cross the Jumna at Boorea into the Doab. Here he fell in with and overpowered a Mahratta detachment under Duttajee Sindhea, who was slain, and Mulhar Rao Holkar was overtaken soon after by two Afghan generals, who routed his troops, and had nearly taken the chief himself by surprise. When the rainy season approached,

the Abdali cantoned his army in the Doab between Sekundra and Anoopshuhur, the country round Delhi, and to the west of the Jumna, having been completely ravaged and laid waste by the Mahrattas.

The court of Poona, on being apprized of the arrival of the Shah, and of the defeat of Duttajee Sindhea and Mulhar Rao Holkar, prepared for a great effort to maintain their supremacy in Hindustan. The retainers of the state were called out, and an immense army advanced towards Delhi, under the command of Sudasheo Rao Bhao, commonly called the Bhao, with whom went Wiswas Rao, the Peshwa's eldest son, and the heads of all the principal Mahratta families. On the march, the chiefs in advance fell in and swelled the train, and the whole reached Delhi, pillaging without remorse as they went, and encountering nowhere any opposition.

The Jumna, which divided the two armies, was still unfordable, and the Bhao, after a short halt at Delhi, moved northward to Kurnal, where his army was occupied for a few days in the siege of Koonjpura, the

possession of a Patan family, on the west bank of the Jumna. The place was taken by storm, after an obstinate resistance by the head of the family, Nijabut Khan, who was slain in the last assault. The Mahratta army then moved back on Paniput, and allowed the Shah to ford the Jumna with all his cavalry, on the 23rd of October. The Bhao judged himself to be unequal to cope with the Shah in the open field; he accordingly threw up intrenchments and took up a position about the town of Paniput, and there waited the attack of the enemy. The Abdali, strengthened by the junction of the confederate forces of Oude, Rohilkhund, and of all the Mahomedan chiefs of Upper Hindustan, surrounded the Mahrattas, and aimed to cut off the Bhao's supplies. For three months, the two armies lay close to each other, occupied in skirmishes and partial actions, and the Shah maintained his blockade. At the end of this time, want began to be felt in the Bhao's lines, and the distress from this cause increased to such a degree as to compel the Bhao to risk an action. On

the 7th of January, 1761, he led his army out of their intrenched position at daybreak, and prepared for the final struggle. The Mahrattas were entirely defeated, and both Wiswas Rao and the Bhao were slain in the action, with many other principal Mahratta chiefs. There have been few battles attended with greater carnage than history assigns to this. The lowest computation of the loss sustained by the Mahrattas fixes the number engaged at 200,000, of whom more than half were slain in the action or pursuit: and, considering how far from their own country they fought, and that the intermediate tract was mostly hostile, our wonder at the loss will be lessened. But the moral effect on the Mahratta nation was greater even than the actual loss. Their entire force had been put forth for the struggle, and defeat was for the moment felt as the annihilation of their ambitious hopes, and the destruction of their power.

The Abdali remained for a few days after this important victory in the city of Delhi, regulating the affairs of Hindustan. He

then returned through the Punjab to Cabul, appointing Khaja Obyd and Zyn Khan to be his governors in Lahore and Sirhind, which he designed permanently to annex to his own dominions.

CHAPTER VIII.*

A.D. 1761 TO 1773.

AHMED SHAH made no stay in the Punjab, and troubled himself little with the disorders that prevailed in its internal administration. The governor he left at Lahore was little better than the military commandant of an out-post, collecting revenues and levying contributions as he could, for the support of his detachment, and in aid of the general resources of the Shah. The imperfect hold thus retained of this territory, and the weakness of the detachment left with the Afghan governor, Khaja Obyd, were highly favour-

* In this chapter several facts have been added to Captain Murray's Narrative, on the authority of the report of Captain Wade, whose information as to the origin of the family of Runjeet Singh will have been derived from the most authentic sources.—*Note of Mr. Prinsep.*

able to the Sikhs, who throve upon the disorder which prevailed; and, in the neglect with which they were treated, secured strongholds and fastnesses in different parts of the country, and added greatly to their power and resources. Amongst others, the ancestors of Runjeet Singh, the late ruler of the Punjab, appeared early in the field as leaders of enterprise, and acquired a reputation that was daily on the increase. The family boasts of no antiquity; the first of whom any traditionary recollection is preserved was a petty zemindar, named Desoo, a Jat, of the Sansee tribe, who resided in a village of the district of Manja, called Sookur-chuk. His patrimony was confined to three ploughs and a well, and little is known of him, except that he was the father of Nodh Singh, whose son, Churut Singh, founded the fortunes of the family, by establishing a Sirdaree, or chieftainship, which his descendants, Muha Singh and Runjeet, improved into the sovereignty over a wide and fertile territory.

Nodh Singh was the first of the family who embraced the Sikh religion: he sought in marriage the daughter of Goolab Singh, a

zemindar of Mejithia, who was already initiated in the rites of that faith, and the *pahal* was proposed as the condition of the nuptials. Nodh Singh yielded; and, after his marriage, gave up his father's plough, and purchasing, or otherwise procuring, a horse, joined the association headed by Kapoor Singh, of Gujrat, which bore the title of Fyzullapurea.

Nodh Singh is stated to have died in 1750; when Churut Singh, following his father's courses, but disdaining to serve in a subordinate capacity, associated with himself his brothers-in-law Dul Singh and Jodh Singh, and, with their help, raised some followers, whom he maintained and kept together by successful predatory enterprises. His wife was of Gujuraolee, a village lying not far north of Lahore, and, through the influence of her family, he obtained leave to erect in its vicinity a small gurhi, or mud fort, to serve as a place of safe custody for his plunder, and of retreat for his family and followers. The post was convenient, from its vicinity to Lahore, as a rallying point for other Sikh associations; and in 1762, it attracted the attention of Khaja Obyd, who marched with

a force to raze it and eject Churut Singh from the neighourhood. The Sikhs, however, attached importance to the post, and a large body tendered their aid for its defence. When the governor approached Gujuraolee, they threw a select body into the gurhi, and hovering about, watched his camp. Khaja Obyd had entertained for the enterprise a number of Sikh troops, who opened a clandestine correspondence with their brethren, and ultimately deserted in a body to them. The governor's other troops immediately took a panic and dispersed, and Khaja Obyd himself had barely time to mount a fleet horse and escape, when the Sikhs broke into his camp and plundered his baggage.

After this defeat, the Afghan governor dared scarcely to shew himself beyond the walls of Lahore, and the Sikh dul, or assembly of chiefs and followers, was publicly held at Amritsur, where the bathings and other ceremonies of the Dewali being performed, it was resolved to invest Jundeala, a place held by Nerunjuni Guru, a Hindu, who had made submission and taken service with Ahmed Shah, and hence had incurred

the vengeance of the votaries of Guru Govind.

The report of these events roused the attention of Ahmed Shah, who, in November 1762, again appeared on the Indus. From thence he made, with a select detachment, one of those long and rapid marches, for which he was celebrated, in the hope of surprising the Sikhs, who had invested, and were still employed in the siege of, Jundeala. They obtained, however, a few hours' notice of his approach, and, breaking up their camp, dispersed in different directions, most of them flying beyond the Sutluj. The Shah rejoined his main body at Lahore, and ordered his governor of Sirhind to watch the Sikhs, and call out the several Musulman sirdars and jagirdars, with their contingents, to operate against them. The Shah was informed by express, soon after this, that the main body of the Sikhs was at Kos Ruheera, on the south bank of the Sutluj (whose course from Ferozepore is from east to west), and that Zyn Khan, with the Baraich and Muler Kotila Musulmans, was watching their movements. The Shah

immediately prepared a strong detachment of cavalry, provisioned for three days; and, leaving Lahore as secretly as possible, led them himself against the enemy. On the evening of the second day, he crossed the Sutluj, and made a halt of a few hours only at Lodiana. By sunrise on the following morning, he joined Zyn Khan, and found him already engaged with the Sikhs, for the latter, trusting to their great numerical superiority, had thought to overpower the Sirhind governor, and attacked him in his camp. The appearance of the high sheep-skin caps of the Shah's body-guard and northern troops gave an immediate turn to the battle, and the Sikhs were broken and fled. The pursuit was continued west as far as Hureana-Burnala, and the slaughter was great.* This disaster is characterized

* It has been estimated at from 25,000 to 30,000 men; but Captain Murray states he was assured by an old Musulman of Muler Kotila, who was in the action, that the entire killed and wounded of the Sikhs in this battle did not exceed 12,000. The want of muster-rolls and the irregular formation of Indian armies, which

in Sikh tradition as the *ghulu-ghara*, or bloody carnage. Ala Singh, of Puteala, chief of the Phool family, was made prisoner at Burnala, and carried by the Shah to Lahore, where, at the intercession of Shah Wulee Khan, the minister, he was released, upon an engagement to pay tribute, and his manly conduct and demeanour having secured him the Shah's favour, he was honoured with the title of raja, and dismissed with a rich dress of state.

The Shah, in irritation against the sect for the trouble they had given him, not less than from bigoted zeal against all idolaters and infidels, signalized his march through Amritsur by the demolition of the Sikh temple of Harmandur and of the sacred tulao, or tank. The first was blown up with gunpowder, and the reservoir, besides being defaced and filled up, as far as materials and time permitted, was polluted with the blood

which are always mere associations of chiefs, all representing their force larger than the reality, must necessarily make it difficult, if not impossible, ever to ascertain the real loss sustained in action.

and entrails of cows and bullocks, a sacrilege even greater in the eyes of the schismatic disciple of Guru Govind than of the orthodox Braminical Hindu.*

The Shah's attention was now turned towards Cashmere, where his governor, Sookh Jewun, had for nine years conducted the administration without remitting any portion of the revenues to the royal treasury. The co-operation of Runjeet Deo, Raja of Jummoo, having been secured, with some difficulty, a strong detachment was sent from Lahore, under the command of Noor-ud-deen, and the raja conducted it across the Pir Panjal mountains into the valley, which submitted after a slight resistance. Sookh Jewun, being made prisoner, was punished with the loss of his eyes. Ahmed Shah, having made these arrangements to secure his territory east of the Indus, returned to Cabul at the end of the year 1762. He left

* Pyramids were erected of the heads of slaughtered Sikhs, and Forster (Travels, vol. i. p. 279) relates that Ahmed Shah caused the walls of those mosques, which had been polluted by the Sikhs, to be washed with their blood, to remove the contamination and expiate the insult.

Kabuli Mul, a Hindu, as his governor of Lahore.

No sooner had the Abdali departed, than the Sikhs, exasperated at the indignities offered to their faith, re-appeared in the field. A Gurumata, or council of the sect, was held publicly at Amritsur, and a large body of them marched thence to Kasoor, which was taken and sacked, and yielded a considerable booty. Elated with this success, they collected a larger force, and determined on the attack of Sirhind. They appeared before the place with 40,000 men, who encamped in two divisions, to the east and west of the town. In December, 1763, the governor, Zyn Khan, moved out to risk an action with the Sikhs. The forces joined battle at Pir Zyn Munayra, a village about seven miles east of Sirhind, when fortune favoured the Sikhs, and the Musulman leaders were slain. The town of Sirhind was then carried, and most of the buildings were razed to the ground, the Sikh animosity against the place being excited by the recollection that the wife and infant son of Guru Govind had there been inhumanly put to death.

Not a house was left standing, and it is even to this day deemed a meritorious act by a Sikh, to pull down three bricks from any standing wall of Sirhind, and convey them to the Sutluj or Jumna, to be cast there into the river.

The audacity of this enterprise recalled Ahmed Shah to Lahore, and he re-appeared there in January, 1764, being his seventh invasion of Hindustan. His arrival was the signal for the Sikhs to disperse and seek refuge in the deserts west and south of Puteala and Naba. Raja Ala Singh, of the former place, had obtained the ruins of Sirhind from the Joomla chief, Bhae Boodha Singh, to whom the town had been assigned by unanimous vote of the chiefs who made the capture, the raja giving him a few productive villages in exchange. By the influence of the minister, Shah Wali Khan, he obtained from the Shah a confirmation of his tenure. The disorders which prevailed were matter of deep regret to the Abdali, but the means or time was wanting for their effectual cure, and he retraced his steps to Cabul, without having done any thing for the punishment or

suppression of the Sikhs. He was no sooner gone, than they collected again, and ventured to attack Lahore. Kabuli Mul was compelled to fly, and the city was parcelled out by the captors in three divisions, which were assigned respectively to Lena Singh, Goojur Singh, and Sobha. Jasa Singh (*kalal*, or mace-bearer), one of their most celebrated leaders, took possession of the subah of Lahore, and coined rupees, with the legend "coined by the grace of Khalsaji, in the country of Ahmed, conquered by Jasa Singh Kalal." Ahmed Shah returned to punish this outrage, and advanced as far as the Sutluj, the Sikhs flying before him to the deserts south of the Ingraon, and no enemy appearing on whom he could wreak his vengeance. On his arrival at the Sutluj, Umur Singh,* the grandson of Raja Ala Singh,

* Umur Singh, of Puteala, was the son of Surdol Singh, who survived his father, Ala Singh, two or three years, according to Khooshwuqt Rae. When Umur Singh waited on Ahmed Shah, he was ordered to shave his head and beard before entering the royal presence. By a *nuzurana* (or present) of a lakh of rupees, he purchased permission to appear bearded and unshorn. Khooshwuqt Rae (for many years the agent

then recently deceased, waited upon him, and received investiture with the title of Maha-Raja-Rajugan-Muhindur Bahadur, which title is now borne by the head of the Puteala family. In the midst of these operations, a *dusta*, or body of 12,000 of the Shah's army, suddenly quitted his camp without orders, and marched back to Cabul. The Shah followed, to reclaim or punish them; but his retreat was harassed by parties of Sikhs, who plundered much of his baggage, and hung on his flanks and rear until he had passed the Chenab.

The Shah having thus quitted the field, the Sikhs remained undisputed masters of the Punjab, and spreading over the country, occupied it as a permanent inheritance, each sirdar, according to his strength, seizing what fell in his way, and acknowledging no superior, nor submitting to the control of anybody, or to any constituted authority what-

agent and intelligencer of the British government at Amritsur), in a Persian account of the affairs of the Sikhs, says the title of Muhindur was obtained from Shah Alum in the time of Saheb Singh, and the style Maha-Raja-Rajugan Bahadur was that conferred on Umur Singh by Ahmed Shah.

soever. Their proceedings were unmolested by any further interference from the west, where Ahmed Shah continued to reign until his death, in 1773, from a cancer in his face. His son and successor Timur enjoyed his throne in peace for twenty years, and made no attempt to recover Lahore and the Punjab. These, with the province of Sirhind, and the country east as far as the Jumna, fell into the possession of the chiefs and associations who had hitherto subsisted on plunder, and were for the most part of low origin, and wholly deficient in education and useful knowledge.

The sirdars or chiefs of the Sikh nation had been followed into the field by relations, friends, and volunteers, and not ordinarily by hired retainers. Most of these looked upon themselves as partners and associates in each enterprise, and regarded the lands now acquired as a common property, in which each was to have his share, according to the degree in which he might have contributed to the acquisition. The associations were called *misuls*, implying that they were confederacies of equals, under chiefs of their own selection.

The chief was to lead in war, and act as arbiter in peace; he was respected and treated with deference by the inferior sirdars, but these owned no obligation to obey, beyond what they might consider to be for their own reciprocal benefit, or for the well-being of the misul. The confederacies had each their distinguishing title, and at this period there are twelve principal misuls enumerated, which together could bring into the field about 70,000 horse. The following is a recapitulation of them.

	Number of Horse.
1st. The Bhangee Misul, at the head of which were the chiefs, Hari Singh, Jhunda Singh, and Ghunda Singh, originally three Jat cultivators of the Doab. The misul derived its name from the extraordinary addiction of its members to the use of *bhang*, an intoxicating smoking material, prepared from the leaves of the hemp plant. Its possessions are now incorporated in the Lahore dominions	10,000
2nd. The Ramgurhea Misul, taking its name from a village east of Lahore, of which the chief, Jasa Singh, was originally a *thoka*, or carpenter. Its possessions were also incorporated in Runjeet Singh's dominions	3,000
3rd. The Ghunneya Misul, headed by Jy	

Singh, a Jat of Ghunnee, which lies also east of Lahore. Its possessions were likewise seized by Runjeet Singh 8,000

4th. The Nukeea Misul, deriving its name from Nukee, a tract of country lying south-west of Lahore, and bordering on Multan. It had several leaders, all Jat cultivators, of low extraction. Its possessions have been seized, and it no longer exists as a separate body .. 2,000

5th. The Aloowala Misul, headed then by Jasa Singh, *kalal*, or mace-bearer, who rose to great eminence amongst the Sikhs, and by his followers was honoured with the title of Badshah. His possessions lay on both sides of the Sutluj, and the present chief, a descendant of Jasa Singh, holds those to the east, under British protection. He was a grandee of the court of Runjeet Singh, treated with distinction, but subject to continual exactions, on account of his Punjab territory 3,000

6th. The Duleeala Misul, headed by Tara Singh Ghyba, a shepherd of Dulee, a village on the Ravi, east of Lahore, who received the nickname of Ghyba, from his ingenious devices for conveying goats and lambs across the torrents to feed. Tara Singh's possessions were incorporated in Runjeet Singh's dominions, but the Roopur, and some other sirdars of the misul, having posessions east of the Sutluj, are under British protection 7,500

7th. The Nishan-wala Misul, headed by Sungut Singh and Mohur Singh, the standard-

bearers of the Dul, or assembled Sikh army, whence the name was derived. The families of both chiefs are extinct, and Umbala, one of its possessions, lapsed, in consequence, to the British. Shahabad, belonging to subordinate chiefs, is under protection 12,000

8th. The Fyzullapurea Misul, sometimes styled Singhpurea, headed by Kupoor Singh and Khooshal Singh, of Fyzullapur, a village near Amritsur, the Mahomedan name of which the Sikhs changed to Singhpur. The chiefs were Jat zemindars; Kupoor Singh was styled Nuwab by his followers; their possessions, west of the Sutluj, have been seized, but those to the east are still held by their descendants, under British protection 2,500

9th. The Krora-Singhea Misul, headed by Krora Singh, and afterwards by Bhugael Singh, both Jats. Krora Singh left no heir. Bhugael Singh's possessions in the Punjab have been absorbed, but his widow holds Chiloundi, and twenty-two other villages east of the Sutluj, under British protection. Chicherouli, belonging to a subordinate chief of the misul, is also under protection, and Bhudawur has lapsed 12,000

10th. The Shuheed and Nihung Misul, headed by Kurum Singh and Goor Buksh Singh. The name, which signifies 'Martyrs,' was acquired by the first chiefs, ancestors of those named, who were beheaded by the Mahomedans at Dunduma, west of Puteala. Their possessions lie east of the Sutluj, and are protected .. 2,000

11th. The Phoolkea and Bhykea Misul, headed by Raja Ala Singh, and afterwards by Raja Umur Singh, his grandson, of Puteala. Phool was the Jat progenitor of the Puteala, Naba, Jeend, and Kythul chiefs, all of whom are under British protection	5,000
12th. The Sookur-Chukea Misul, headed by Churut Singh, ancestor of Runjeet Singh, whose progenitors were Jat zemindars of Sookur-Chuk	2,500
	69,500

In the above list, the misul of Churut Singh holds the last place, and was formed, probably, after the successful defence of Gujraolee and the defeat of Khaja Obyd had raised the reputation of, and given a new distinction to, that chief. Every misul acted independently, or in concert, as necessity or inclination suggested, but there was generally an assembly of the chiefs, called the Surhut Khalsa, held twice a year, at Amritsur, during the Bysakhi and Dewali festivals, which occur in April and October. On these occasions, after bathing in the sacred reservoir, they generally held a Gurumata, or special council, where expeditions of importance, or any matters of more than ordinary

moment, were submitted to their united wisdom. If the joint forces of several misuls took the field upon any predatory enterprise, or to collect *rakha* (black-mail), the army assumed the denomination of a *dul* of the *khalsaji*.

When the misuls acquired their territorial possessions, it became the first duty of the chiefs to partition out the lands, towns, and villages amongst those who considered themselves as having made the conquest, *shamil*, or in common. Every surkunda, or leader of the smallest party of horse that fought under the standard of the misul, demanded his share, in proportion to the degree in which he had contributed to the acquisition; and, as they received no pay from the chief, and he had no other recompense to offer for their services, there was no resource but to adopt this mode of satisfying them. The sirdaree, or chief's portion, being first divided off, the remainder was separated into puttees, or parcels for each surkunda, and these were again subdivided and parcelled out to inferior leaders, according to the number of horse they brought into the field. Each took his

portion as a co-sharer, and held it in absolute independence.

It was impossible that this state of things should subsist long in the Punjab, any more than it had done in England, France, and other countries of Europe, when they similarly fell a prey to hordes of associated warriors, who acknowledged no systematic general authority or government. When the link of a common enemy and common danger was removed, and the chiefs were converted from needy adventurers to lords of domains, discords and mutual plunderings commenced, as temper, ambition, or avarice excited to contention. Cause of quarrel was never wanting in the confusion of the coparcenary system. The disputes and divisions, which subsisted in each lordship, favoured the designs of the aspiring from without, whose aid being solicited by one of the parties, an opening was frequently found to eject both. In cases of frontier disputes, or of injury, or wrong of any kind sustained or fancied, the chief would call upon his kindred and retainers to furnish him the means of redress, and they would feel bound by a sense

of honour not to fail, when the *chara*, or gathering, was demanded in such a cause; but in a matter of internal strife within the misul, every one would be free to choose his own side, and either party would deem it fair to fortify itself with any aid it could command from without. Upon occasions of gathering, it became customary for the chief, or person demanding it, to pay a rupee per *kathee*, or saddle; in other respects, the service was gratuitous, and plunder was the reward expected by those who joined either standard. The past life and habits of the Sikhs precluded any scruples on their part as to the conduct or character of their associates. The most daring culprits found ready admission into their ranks, and it was a point of honour to deliver no one upon demand of a neighbour, whatever might be the crime laid to his charge. Hence arose the practice of *gaha*, or self-redress, by individuals, no less than by chiefs; and every owner of a village was compelled to surround his possession with a wall and ditch; while in towns, or places held in joint property, the houses of the coparcenary, and of all who were exposed

to the appetence or revengeful passions of others, were built as towers or keeps, and a fort in joint tenancy would ordinarily be divided by an inner retrenchment, as a protection against treachery from the fellow-occupant.

The tenure that has been described above is the *Puteedari*, that of every associate in the misul of less rank than a sirdar, down even to the single horseman, who equipped and mounted himself: all these regulated entirely the management of their *putee*, fining, confining, or even further illtreating, according to their pleasure, any zemindar, or working ryot of their allotment. His complaint could not be listened to or redressed by any superior; but in case of quarrel with an equal, reference would be made to the surkunda, and if his decision failed to give satisfaction, an appeal might be made to the general sirdar. The more ordinary mode, however, was to collect friends and relations, and seek a prompt self-redress. It was not legitimate for a puteedar to sell his tenure to a stranger, but he might mortgage it to satisfy any present want, and at his demise

might settle, by will, to which of his male relations it should go. Reciprocal aid, for mutual protection and defence, was the relation in which a puteedar stood in other respects to the sirdar, and the only condition of his tenure.

Besides the puteedari, however, there were three other tenures created, arising out of the circumstances in which different chiefs found themselves, from the manner of their association with those who composed their misul. These were the *Misuldari*, the *Tabadari*, and the *Jagurdari*.

Bodies of inferior strength, or petty chiefs, with their followers, attached themselves sometimes to a misul, without subscribing to any conditions of association or dependence. The allotments of land assigned to such would be considered as the free reward of their co-operation, and would be held in no sort of dependence; they were called Misuldari. If dissatisfied with his chief, a misuldar might transfer himself with his possessions to another, under whose protection or countenance he might prefer to continue.

A tabadar was, on the other hand, a re-

tainer, as the word is understood in Europe; one completely subservient; the lands, which were his reward, were liable to forfeiture for any act of disobedience or rebellion, and, at the caprice of the sirdar, might be resumed upon any occasion of displeasure.

The third class of tenures, or jagirs, were given to needy relations, dependants, and entertained soldiers who deserved well, and the holders were liable to be called upon for their personal services at all times, with their quotas or contingents, equipped and mounted at their own charge, according to the extent of the grant. These were even further under the power of the sirdar than the tabadari grants. Both were hereditary only according to his pleasure, the lands of them formed part of the allotment set apart for the sirdari, and the misul, or association, had, of course, nothing to say in such assignments.

The religious and charitable appropriations and grants, viz. those made to Sikh gurus, soodees, and baidees, or to endowments for temples, and for charitable distributions of alms, and sometimes even to Musulman pirzadas,

need no description, for they have nothing to distinguish them from what are found all over India.

The above explanation has been necessary to give some idea of the state of things, which resulted from the two provinces of Lahore and Sirhind being left to be occupied by the Sikhs, when finally abandoned by the Afghans, as they had previously been by the Mogul and Delhi officers. The European reader will at once be struck by the similarity between the condition of things above described, and the relations which have been handed down to us of what occurred in England, when the Saxons similarly spread over and occupied that country; and when Clovis and the Franks seized the fairest portion of Gaul. The arrangements for government were the very rudest that the most ignorant tribes ever devised: and, though the ideologist may find something attractive in contemplating such attempts to realize in practice the dream of universal independence and equality of condition between individuals, he must, indeed, be a bold speculator in politics, who would

assume that any class could find happiness, contentment, or rest, in a country ruled by seventy thousand sovereigns, as were the unfortunate provinces of Lahore and Sirhind, when the Sikhs assumed dominion over them.

CHAPTER IX.

A.D. 1773 TO 1791.

THE Punjab henceforward became the theatre of the squabbles and petty feuds which arose amongst the chiefs thus left in possession, and as these ordinarily were of little interest and less variety, those only deserve relation, which contributed to produce the present condition of the state; in other words, those in which the ancestors of Runjeet Singh, or himself, bore a part.

The hill Raja of Jummoo, Runjeet Deo, had a misunderstanding with his eldest son Brij-Raj, and desired to set aside his pretensions to the succession in favour of the youngest, Meean Dulel Singh. In order to secure his hereditary rights, Brij-Raj broke into rebellion, and applied to Churut Singh, offering a large yearly tribute, on condition of his aiding to depose his father. Churut

Singh having an old enmity against Runjeet Deo, closed with the offer, and strengthening himself by association with Jy Singh, of the Ghunea Misul, their united force marched into the hills and encamped at Oodhachur, on the bank of the Busuntur river. The Raja, having received timely notice of the designs of the heir-apparent, had made corresponding preparations for resistance. The defence of the capital he reserved to himself, but collected a force to oppose the invasion, composed of auxiliaries from Chumba, Noorpur, Busehur, and Kangra, in the hills, to which were added, besides a party of his own troops, the confederated forces of the Bhangee Misul, under Jhunda Singh, whom he induced to lend his services in the extremity. The two armies lay encamped on opposite sides of the Busuntur, and in a partial skirmish between the Sikh auxiliaries, Churut Singh was killed by the bursting of his own matchlock.*

* Khooshwuqt Rae says this event happened at Oodhoo-Chuk, on the Busuntur, after the two armies had been for six months encamped on opposite sides of the stream,

He was 45 years of age, and had risen from a common Dharwee, or highwayman, to be sirdar of a separate misul, with a territory computed to yield about three lakhs of rupees. He left a widow, Desan by name, with two sons and a daughter, called respectively Maha Singh, Suhuj Singh, and Raj Koonwur. The eldest son, Maha Singh, then ten years of age, succeeded to the sirdaree; but the widow and Jy Singh Ghunee assumed the immediate direction of affairs. It was determined by them to assassinate Jhunda Singh Bhangee, who was the main stay of the Jummoo Raja's party, and the avowed enemy of both the Sukur-Chukea and Ghunee misuls. A sweeper was tempted by a large bribe to undertake this hazardous enterprise, and he succeeded in effecting his purpose by firing at and mortally wounding the Bhangee chief, as he was walking unattended through the Jummoo camp. The Sukur-Chukea and Ghunee Sikhs, being satis-

stream, skirmishing with one another. He also confirms the story of the assassination of Jhunda Singh, but says he was riding about at the time with two or three orderlies.

fied with the revenge thus taken, withdrew soon after from the enterprise in which they had engaged. The Bhangee troops had similarly left the opposite camp on the death of their chief. Thus Brij-Raj Deo was left alone to settle with his father his rights of inheritance to the Raj: before the departure, however, of Maha Singh, he went through the ceremony of an exchange of turbands (*dustarbudlee*) with Brij-Raj, which bound him to brotherhood for life. These events occurred in 1774.*

Several subordinate sirdars of Churut

* Captain (Sir C.) Wade gives 1771 as the date of Churut Singh's death, and states it to have occurred in a general action with the Bhangee Sikhs, at Suhawara, near Jusar Dodeh, in the Reechna Doab. He concurs in assigning the bursting of his matchlock as the cause of Churut Singh's death, but says that Jhunda Singh was shot by a man of his own party in the course of the action. The discrepance, except that of date, is not very material; but it is singular that such an event should be so differently reported to the two officers. Captain Murray is deemed the superior authority, and his version has therefore been adhered to. In like manner, Captain Wade differs from Captain Murray in the date assigned to the birth of Maha Singh. Captain Wade places it in 1757. Captain Murray fixes it in 1764.

Singh's recently formed misul, mistrusting the youth of Maha Singh, or dissatisfied with the regent widow, aimed now to shake off their dependence. Of these, one Dhurum Singh was the first to commit himself by an overt act of rebellion. He relied on the succour and countenance of Gunda Singh, Jhunda Singh's successor in the sirdaree of the Bhangee Misul, but was deceived in his expectations, and suffered forfeiture of his lands for contumacy, before any aid could come to his relief.* The rest were deterred by this example, and the moment appearing favourable, the nuptials of Maha Singh were celebrated, in 1776, with the daughter of Gujput Singh, of Jeend, to whom he had previously been betrothed. Jy Singh and a large armed force of Sukur-Chukea and Ghunee Sikhs crossed the Sutluj, with the *Barat*, to Budrookh, where the young chief was met by his bride; and a large concourse of sir-

* Khooshwuqt Rae says that Gunda Singh, head of the Bhangee Misul, being applied to by Dhurum Singh for aid against Maha Singh, made answer, "Why should I destroy this youth and make over his inheritance to a servant?"

dars of the nation did honour to the ceremony, it being with them obligatory to give attendance on such occasions, and the omission being looked upon as a slight, and a wide deviation from propriety.

Maha Singh is next heard of as the associate of Jy Singh in an enterprise for the capture of Rusul-Nugur, now called Ram-Nugur by the Sikhs, situated on the east bank of the Chenab, and held by a Jat Musulman, named Pir Mahomed, who was at the head of the ancient tribe of Chutta, styled sometimes *Munchurea*, from a considerable town in their occupation, and many of whom have embraced the religion of the *Koran*. The pretext for this attack was, that the tribe had given up to the Bhangee Misul a large piece of ordnance, left behind by the Abdali Shah, and placed with them in deposit, from inability to cross it over the Chenab. This gun was of much celebrity, and is now known as the *Bhangee Top*:* it

* Khooshwuqt Rae says the *Bhangee Top* had been taken by Churut Singh from Lena Singh, but the carriage breaking down in the attempt to carry it to Gujraolee, it was left in deposit with the zemindars of Rusul-

was claimed for the Khalsa, or Sikh nation at large, to be appropriated by an assembly of chiefs. Rusul-Nugur was besieged and blockaded for four months, and the Bhangee Sikhs, being employed at the time in plundering or levying tribute in the Multan and Bahawulpur districts, neglected to afford succour or relief. The place consequently fell to Maha Singh, who acquired great reputation by this early feat of arms, so that many independent sirdars, who had hitherto attached themselves to the Bhangee Misul, transferred their services to him, and preferred to follow his leading in war, and to live under his protection.

Two years after this event, on the 2nd November, 1780, a son was born to Maha Singh, by his wife, of the Jeend family, and named Runjeet Singh. The child was attacked by the small-pox at a very early age, and, the disease taking an unfavourable turn, his life was endangered; whereupon the father, according to Asiatic custom, made large

Rusul-Nugur, until it should be re-demanded by the captor. The restoration of the gun to the Bhangees was therefore a breach of faith.

donations to the poor in charity, fed multitudes of Bramins and holy men, to secure their prayers, and sent gifts to the sacred temples at Kangra and Juwala-Mookhee. The boy recovered, but with the loss of one of his eyes, whence he was termed *Kana*, or 'the one-eyed;' and his face was marked with the disease.

Maha Singh was engaged at this period in settling the territory he had inherited or acquired, and in extending his influence and connections. The Bhangees lost their principal sirdars; and, having aimed to establish themselves in Multan, brought down on themselves an Afghan army, which retook the city from them, and further ejected them from Bahawulpur and Munkera. The consequence was, that the power of the misul was effectually broken, and the rising fortune and reputation of Maha Singh enabled him to extend his relations and strengthen himself from its ruin. He was cautious, however, of engaging in any direct hostility with his Sikh brethren, well knowing that, to follow such means of aggrandizement, would breed ill-will, and lead probably to a confederacy

for his destruction. Again, the Afghan power was still too formidable and too united for him to hope to aggrandize himself at the expense of that nation. His restless spirit was, however, not long in finding a quarter in which to pursue his schemes.

Raja Runjeet Deo of Jummoo was dead, and his son, Brij-Raj Deo, having succeeded to that raj, proved unworthy and debauched, so that discontent prevailed in the principality, and afforded an opening for interference. Maha Singh, tempted by this state of things, resolved to exact tribute and enforce fealty from his turband brother; he accordingly moved with a force into the hills, and Brij-Raj, being in no condition for resistance, fled to the Trikota-Devi mountain, a three-peaked eminence, where is an Usthan, or temple of Bishun-Devi, in which the Hindu devotee presents an offering of coco-nuts. The town of Jummoo was at this period very prosperous and rich, for, in consequence of the distractions of the Punjab, many of the wealthy merchants had been induced to seek an asylum, or to establish a branch-firm

within the hills beyond their influence.* Jummoo was well situated for this purpose, while under Runjeet Deo the resort of this class of persons to his dominions was encouraged, and they lived in ease and security. Maha Singh and his Sikhs sacked the town, and ravaged the whole territory of Jummoo, and he is reported to have brought away a large spoil, including much specie and valuables of all kinds.†

* Khooshwuqt Rae names several families which had found refuge in Jummoo, during the troubles of the Punjab. Amongst others, Mulika Zumani, a Delhi queen, and one of the widows of Meer Munoo. Hari Singh, the son, with other members of the family of Raja Kaonra Mul, was also living there in splendour; and Dilput Rae, the son of Lukhput Rae, had likewise settled there, with the remains of several other families of the nobles of the Delhi, or vice-regal courts. Runjeet Deo treated all these refugees with much distinction, and particularly enjoined his son to continue to them the same courtesy. Brij-Raj, however, was no sooner seated on the gudi, than he made them the objects of his extortion. From Hari Singh he is said to have obtained 50 lakhs of rupees.

† Khooshwuqt Rae states the plunder obtained by Maha Singh, from Jummoo, at two crores of rupees; but this seems much exaggerated. He also states that Brij-

By this conduct Maha Singh, though he enriched himself, raised also many enemies. The Bhangee Sikhs, who had long maintained a connection with Jummoo, were highly irritated, and, what was even of more consequence to Maha Singh's rising fortunes, the displeasure and jealousy of his old mentor and guardian, Jy Singh, of Ghunee, was incurred. This chief, of a haughty imperious temper, was now in the zenith of his power. Maha Singh, on his return from the hills, proceeded with his booty to Amritsur, with the double purpose of paying his respects to Jy Singh, and performing his ablutions in the holy reservoir. The old chief received him with such coolness and displeasure, that Maha Singh, assuming the demeanour of an inferior, approached with a tray of sweetmeats in his hand, and begged to be made acquainted with the cause of offence, professing his sense of filial obligation and attachment to Jy Singh, and offering any atonement in his power. Jy Singh was stretched

Brij-Raj had been killed in an action with a Bhangee detachment, and his son, Chyt Singh, was the Raja, when Maha Singh captured and sacked the town.

at length on his couch, and, drawing his sheet over him, called out loudly and rudely, that he desired to hear no more of the Bhugtea's (dancing boy's) pathetic conversation.* Maha Singh retired in high indignation at this reception, and determined to be revenged for the insult. He mounted his horse, and, with a few followers, made his escape secretly from Amritsur, where Jy Singh's power and influence were paramount, and returned to his home to seek the means of executing his purposes. Being too weak to enter the field against the Ghunee and Bhangee misuls alone, he cast about for associates, and determined to make a friend of Jasa Singh, sirdar of the Ramghurea Misul, who had recently been ousted from his possessions in the Punjab by a confederacy of the Aloowala and Ghunee associations, and the latter had been considerable gainers by the aggression. Agents were immediately

* According to Khooshwuqt Rae, Jy Singh ordered his people to shoot Maha Singh, and Goor Bukhsh, his son, in vain interceded to save him; he also says, that Maha Singh went off immediately from the interview, and was pursued and fired at as far as the village of Mejithia, but escaped fortunately without injury.

despatched to recall Jasa Singh, and to assure him of aid and support, if disposed to make an effort for the recovery of his lost possessions. The despoiled chief, who was living by depredations in the Doab of the Jumna and Ganges, with the wilds of Hansi and Hisar for his place of refuge, having satisfied himself of the motives of Maha Singh's offer, lost no time in returning into the Punjab, with all the force he could collect.

The combined troops of Maha Singh and Jasa Singh now appeared suddenly within a few miles of Butala, the principal town of Jy Singh's possessions, and where he had fixed his residence. Here they were joined by Sunsar Chund, Raja of Kot Kangra, in the hills, and by Umur Singh Bugreh, and some other disaffected tributaries of the Ghunee Sirdar, who had been stirred up by Maha Singh. Jy Singh was now called upon to render up the share of the Ramghurea possessions, which had been allotted to him, and, on his refusal, the invaders proceeded to occupy and ravage the country. Jy Singh made a gathering of his misul, and placing his son, Goor Bukhsh Singh, at the head of

8,000 horse, sent him to punish and expel the invaders. An action ensued, in which Goor Bukhsh exposed himself with youthful rashness, and was slain; whereupon his followers dispersed and fled, and the victors soon after made themselves masters of Butala, when Jy Singh, being humbled, was compelled to sue for peace, which was granted to him by the young chief he had insulted, under condition that he should render up the Ramghurea lands to Jasa Singh, and the fort of Kangra, which he obtained by stratagem, to Sunsar Chund. These terms being accepted, the allies retained the town of Butala; but towards the close of the year, Suda Koonwur, widow of Goor Bukhsh Singh, succeeded by intrigue with the inhabitants in ejecting the garrison and recovering it.

Jy Singh had set his hopes on the promise afforded by the character of Goor Bukhsh; and though he had two other sons, Bagh Singh and Nidhan Singh, he treated them with neglect, his whole affections being engrossed by the family of his deceased son. The widow, Suda Koonwur, gained an entire ascendant over the old man, and being of an

aspiring, bold spirit, she procured that a separate appanage of some villages about Sohnan and Hajipur should be set apart for the surviving sons, while she regulated every thing at Butala for the interest of herself and her only child by Goor Bukhsh, a daughter. At her suggestion, a negotiation was opened for the affiance of the girl, whose name was Mehtab-koonwur, to Runjeet Singh, the young son of Maha Singh, whom she hoped thus to bind to a permanent reconciliation, and through his friendship and powerful support, to secure for herself the sirdaree upon her father-in-law's decease. Maha Singh assented readily to the union, and the *mungnee*, or betrothment, of the children was duly performed in the year 1785, and contributed further to raise Maha Singh in power and reputation; for through the friendship of the Ramghurea sirdar, and the Kangra Raja, which was permanently secured by his aid in the recovery of their lost possessions, added to the influence resulting from this close connection with the Ghunee Misul, there was no one in the Punjab, or of the Sikh nation, who could compete with him in

authority, or command equal means. The result was favourable to the prosperity of the country, and the Punjab, for several years during this chief's ascendency, enjoyed a repose and tranquillity to which it had long been a stranger.

Until 1791, Maha Singh continued to administer in peace the territory he had acquired, and to exercise his influence for the benefit of those connected with him. In that year Goojur Singh, the Sikh chief of Goojrat, died, and Saheb Singh, his son, succeeded to the sirdaree. The sister of Maha Singh had been given in marriage to Saheb Singh, by Churut Singh, but the ties of affinity had little influence in restraining ambitious views, and the desire of aggrandizement, which filled the mind of Maha Singh, was not to be so checked. He deemed the moment favourable for asserting superiority over Goojrat, and for claiming tribute. Saheb Singh evaded compliance, alleging, that his father was an adherent of the Bhangee Misul, and had never fought under the standard of the Sukur-Chukea, on whom he acknowledged no dependence. Maha Singh

marched, on receiving this reply, and besieged Saheb Singh in his fort of Soohdura. The Goojratea chief applied in his distress to the Bhangee Sikhs, and Kurum Singh Dooloo came with the strength of that misul to interrupt the siege. Though not strong enough to enter the field with Maha Singh, they hovered about his camp, and put him to considerable inconvenience for supplies; a detachment of the Sukur Chukeas, however, succeeded, after a time, in beating up the quarters and plundering the camp of the Bhangees, after which the siege proceeded. Maha Singh had been three months before the place, when, in the early part of the year 1792, he became seriously ill. The siege was immediately broken up, and the chief being carried back to his principal place of residence, Goojraolee, expired there, in the twenty-seventh year of his age. He was brave, active, and prudent beyond his years, and left a high reputation amongst his nation for all the qualities of a sirdar. He shook off the trammels of his mother's guardianship at the early age of seventeen, and some time after, having detected her in an intrigue

with a Bramin, put her to death with his own hand: an act of barbarous justice that does not seem to have lessened his reputation, or in any way to have affected his character injuriously, in the eyes of his contemporaries.

Maha Singh left only one son, Runjeet Singh, who was then in his twelfth year. His mother became regent, and was assisted by the minister of her husband, Lukhoo or Lukhput Singh. Suda Koonwur, the minor chief's mother-in-law, exerted also much influence in the conduct of affairs, and in the year following, viz. 1793, the demise of Jy Singh left the Ghunee Misul likewise under her direction, every thing having been prepared beforehand for the exclusion of the sons of that sirdar.

Little care was taken of the education of Runjeet Singh. The means were furnished to him of gratifying every youthful passion or desire, and his early years were passed in indulgence, and in following the sports of the field. He was never taught to read or write in any language. While still in tutelage, however, a second marriage was con-

tracted for him with Raj Koonwur, a daughter of the Nukee chief, Khujan Singh.

Upon attaining the age of seventeen years, Runjeet Singh, in imitation of his father, assumed in person the conduct of affairs, and dismissed the dewan: it is further stated that, under the guidance of Dul Singh, his father's maternal uncle, who had long borne ill-will to the dewan, Lukhoo was despatched on an expedition to Kitas, where he was slain in an affray with the zemindars, not without suspicion of contrivance. His father's example gave sanction to an act of further cruelty in Runjeet Singh. The regent mother was accused of having led a life of profligate indulgence, the late dewan being not the only paramour admitted to her favours. Upon receiving evidence of this, it is said, that Runjeet Singh gave his sanction to, or at least connived at, her being put to death, and the old chief, Dul Singh, is designated as the perpetrator of the act by means of poison.* Runjeet Singh, with the advice of

* The above particulars are from Captain Wade's Report. Captain Murray merely states, that "he dismissed the dewan, and caused his mother to be assassinated."

Suda Koonwur, carried on now in person all the affairs of his sirdaree; and the difficulties he experienced, with the means by which he extricated himself, and made every circumstance contribute to his further rise, will form the subject of the chapters which follow.

sinated." Captain Wade assigns the year 1787 for the decease of Maha Singh, and states him to have been born in 1757, as before remarked, which are discrepancies of date with Captain Murray, for which I am unable to account; the latter is the authority followed. Khooshwuqt Rae is silent in respect to the fate of Runjeet Singh's mother, but admits that the dewan was made away with, and adds that Runjeet was for some time after distrustful of the whole race of mutusudees, and would employ none.

CHAPTER X.

REIGN OF RUNJEET SINGH.

A.D. 1794 TO 1808.

In the course of the years 1795, 1796, and 1797, the Punjab was twice exposed to invasion by Shah Zeman, who had recently succeeded the peaceful Timur on the throne of Cabul. The Sikhs ventured not to oppose him openly in the field, and his coming, therefore, was a source of infinite confusion, leading to a temporary abandonment of their possessions by the sirdars near his route. In 1798 the Shah advanced again, and entered Lahore without opposition; but, after a few months' stay there, finding it impossible to make any arrangements for the permanent occupation of the country, or to render the Punjab in other respects a source of advantage to himself, he retraced his steps to his hereditary dominions west of the Indus, and the Sikh sirdars returned each to the terri-

tory he had acquired, and which had been evacuated on the Shah's approach. Runjeet Singh was one of those who retired before the Shah, and on this last occasion he joined other sirdars similarly circumstanced with himself, or otherwise linked to his misul, and made an expedition across the Sutluj, where he employed the interval of the Shah's stay at Lahore in a tour for the exaction of tribute, and for the reduction to his authority of any towns or villages he could master.

Upon the retirement of the Shah, Runjeet Singh began to entertain designs for securing Lahore to himself, and his mother-in-law, Suda Koonwur, encouraged his views, and lent her aid to forward them. The city was at this time in the joint possession of Chyt Singh, Mohur Singh, and Saheb Singh. Runjeet, however, by an opportune service to Zeman Shah, obtained from that prince a grant, with permission to take possession. The Afghan had been compelled to precipitate his retreat from the Punjab, by intelligence of designs from Persia, on the side of Herat, having for their object the support of the claims of Shah Mahmud. On arriving

at the Jelum, that river was found swollen with temporary rain, so that the Afghan artillery could not be crossed. Not thinking it expedient to wait on this account, Shah Zeman wrote to Runjeet Singh, to extricate and forward to him the guns left behind, holding out the hope, that his known wishes in respect to Lahore might be complied with if this duty were well performed. The politic Sikh raised eight out of the twelve guns from the bed of the river into which they had sunk, and forwarded them to the Shah, from whom he received in return the grant he desired. The remaining four guns were not raised till 1823, and are now in the arsenal at Lahore.*

Armed with this authority over the Mahomedan population of the town, and assisted by the credit and troops of Suda Koonwur, Runjeet Singh prepared an expedition against the city of Lahore. The

* The fact of Runjeet Singh's having obtained a grant of Lahore from the Afghan sovereign is not mentioned by Captain Murray. The statement, with the circumstances under which it was alleged to be procured, is made on the authority of Captain Wade.

three Sikh chiefs in possession were profligate and debauched, and neglectful of the means of securing themselves. They had few troops or retainers, and their administration was most unpopular. In order to prepare the way for the success of his scheme, Runjeet deputed Kazee Abdur-Rahman, a native of Rusulnugur, to open an intrigue with some of the principal Musulman inhabitants. Meer Mohkum, manager for Chyt Singh, with Mahomed Ashik and Meer Shadee, were won over to assist the project, and promised, on the approach of Runjeet, to open one of the gates to him. Accordingly, he marched, accompanied by his mother-in-law, and, having been admitted without opposition, Chyt Singh and his two co-partners were compelled to accept jagirs for subsistence; and Runjeet Singh thus established his own authority, and made arrangements to secure his conquest. His successful aggression and acquisition of a place so famous excited the jealousy of all rival sirdars, and an assembly of troops for recovery of this city took place at Basim. Goolab Singh Bhangee, Saheb

Singh of Goojrat, and Nujum-ud-deen of Kasoor, were the chiefs at the head of the confederacy most active in hostility to Runjeet. After a few months of debate, however, and some fruitless skirmishes, finding the young chief well prepared, their army broke up, and the city was left ever after in Runjeet's uninterrupted possession.

The Musulmans of Kasoor, a considerable town about forty miles S. E. of Lahore, incurred the just resentment of Runjeet Singh, as well by the part their chief had taken in this confederacy, as by depredations since committed by them up to the gates of the city. His next enterprise was against their possessions, and in 1801-2 Nujum-ud-deen was compelled to submit to terms, binding himself to furnish a quota of troops under his brother Kutub-ud-deen, and to become a feudatory of Runjeet. In the same year the young chief, having proceeded to bathe in the sacred reservoir of Guru Ram-Das, at Tarun-Turun, met there Sirdar Fateh Singh, of the Aloowala Misul, and, contracting a friendship with him, made an exchange of turbands.

The year 1802 was marked by the birth* of Khuruk Singh, the successor of Runjeet Singh. His mother was Raj-Koonwur, daughter of Khujan Singh of Nukee. In the same year, the fort of Cheniot, held by Jasa Singh, son of the Bhangee chief, Kurum Singh Dooloo, was besieged, and, after a short resistance, taken by Runjeet, who made to the expelled chief a trifling allowance for maintenance.†

The distracted state of the Sikh country at this time inspired some apprehensions in the British government of India, that a French force might be established in the Punjab.

* Captain Wade places this event after the decease of Dul Singh, and pending measures to occupy his jagir and fort of Aleepoor, which, according to Captain Murray, would make it in 1804. The year 1802 is, however, assigned as the date by both officers.

† Jasa Singh of Chunduniot, or Cheniot, is said to have surrendered to Runjeet Singh, upon a promise of restoration sworn on the holy *Grant'h*, but was nevertheless made prisoner immediately on presenting himself, and stripped of all his possessions. Runjeet Singh, being taxed with the perjury, called for the holy volumes on which he had sworn, and the wrappers being opened, some bricks in the shape of books were all that was found.

Mr. Wellesley wrote to the Governor-general, in August, 1802, that one of General Perron's officers had obtained possession of a considerable tract of country, and that "there can be no doubt of General Perron's intention to assume as large a portion of the Punjab as he may think himself able to manage, or it may be convenient to him to retain, and it is equally certain that the actual state of that country will render it an easy conquest to any thing like a regular force."*

In December, 1802, Runjeet assembled his own and Suda Koonwur's forces, and being joined by the Aloowala, the three united misuls fell suddenly on the family of Goolab Singh, the last Bhangee sirdar of note, who had been always at feud with Maha Singh when living, and was at the head of the confederacy which had attempted to recover Lahore. Goolab Singh had died in 1800, leaving a widow, named Rani Sookha, and a son, Goordut Singh, still a minor, under her guardianship. The moment was considered favourable to break for ever

* Wellesley Despatches, vol. v. p. 70.

the power of the Bhangees. Accordingly, the widow was called upon to surrender the fort of Lohgurh in Amritsur, to give up the great Bhangee gun, and in other respects to submit to the confederates. Feeling unequal to resist, the helpless widow evacuated Lohgurh, and fled with her child, and the family has since sunk to indigence and obscurity.*

Pending this operation, a domestic feud occurred in Kasoor; and, Nujum-ud-deen, being assassinated, was succeeded in the sirdaree by Kutub-ud-deen, his brother. The juncture appearing favourable, Runjeet Singh moved down, with a large force of confederated Sikhs, against that territory;

* Goolab Singh Bhangee died, it is said, from excessive drinking. Lohgurh stood a siege, and was taken by assault,—the besiegers having found entrance by a wicket gate, left open to act as an embrasure for an enormous gun. The place was taken in the midst of a storm in the month of December, and Goordut and his mother, escaping, were all night exposed to the cold and rain, but found refuge at last with Jodh Singh, head of the Rumgurhea Misul, whose fort, Ramgurh, was not very distant. Runjeet Singh found his aunt, the sister of Maha Singh, in the fort, and sent her off in a *rut'h*, or covered cart, next morning, to share the misfortunes of Rani Sookha.

but, after plundering the open country for three months, finding he could make no impression on the strongholds, which are numerous in the district, he accepted a pecuniary payment, and retired. In March of this year, Raja Sunsar Chund, of Kot Kangra, in the hills, made a descent into the plains, and plundered some villages in the territory of Suda Kooñwur, that is, belonging to the Ghunee Misul. She called for the aid of her son-in-law, who marched immediately with Futeh Singh Aloowala, and soon expelled the mountaineers. The occasion was taken to invest Sujanpur, which was held by the Sikh chief Boodh Singh Bhugut, from whom a sum of ready money, a large piece of ordnance, and the three districts of Buhrampoor, Dhurumkot, and Sukhalgurh were extorted.

From the Jalendra Doab, where these operations had carried him, Runjeet Singh crossed the Ravi, and returned to Lahore by a detour through Sealkot and Rusulnugur, plundering as he went. The widow of Choor-Mul was, during this march, deprived of Phugwara, which was given in an exchange to

Futeh Singh Aloowala. Sunsar Chund ventured again into the plains, towards the close of the year, and seized several towns in the Jalendra, but decamped again on the march thither of Runjeet with a body of Aloowala and Ghunee confederates. In February following, the Hill Raja again appeared, and having seized Hoshyarpur and Bijwara, attempted to maintain himself there. From both, however, he was expelled by the Sikhs, and Runjeet, after this service, made a tour of exaction, in which, either as gift or tribute, he obtained considerable sums from the old Sikh chiefs, Tara Singh Ghyba, Dhurum Singh, of Amritsur, and Boodh Singh, of Fyzullapur. His conduct excited the jealousy and fears of all the sirdars, who had hitherto enjoyed independence and immunity from molestation. They saw that Runjeet aimed to reduce them to fealty and subservience; yet were they so divided and filled with jealousies, and without a head or leader, that they attempted nothing, and could devise no scheme to relieve themselves from his arbitrary exactions, and from the forfeiture and resumption with which he seemed systema-

tically to visit the family of every chief who died. It was in this year that Dul Singh, the brother-in-law of Churut Singh, expired, when Runjeet acquired Akulgurh* and Jummabad by escheat, these places being held as dependencies of the Sukurchukea Misul. Dul Singh had been in disgrace some time before his death.

When Lord Wellesley, in 1803, was instructing Lord Lake respecting the campaign against the Mahrattas, he endeavoured to secure the co-operation of the Sikh chiefs. He understood then that Runjeet Singh, "the rajah of Lahore," was considered to be the principal, and to possess much influence over the whole Sikh body. His Lordship mentions that M. Perron had excited the suspicion and jealousy of the chiefs, by false and malignant statements of the views and intentions of our government with respect to the Sikhs, and he recommends Lord Lake to suggest to the Sikh chiefs the danger they will hereafter be exposed to by any oppo-

* Formerly Aleepur, a possession of the Chitta Musulmans. The name was changed by the Sikhs on their capturing the place in 1770.

sition to the British Government, and the advantages they might derive from a connection with so powerful a state.* It appears† that Runjeet transmitted proposals to Lord Lake for the transfer of the Sikh territories south of the Sutluj, on condition of mutual defence against the respective enemies of that chief and the British nation.

The dissensions of the four sons of Timur Shah, Humayun, Mahmud, Shah Zeman, and Shah Shujah, began at this time to produce distractions in the Afghan empire, which led to the royal authority being everywhere held in contempt. Runjeet Singh was encouraged by this state of things to direct his views westward, and after a *Dusera*, passed in more than ordinary excess at Lahore, he determined, in the year 1804, to seek further aggrandizement by the seizure of the dependencies of that empire, east of the Indus. He accordingly crossed the Ravi in October; and, having the Aloowala chief in attendance, moved to Ramnugur on the Chenab, and thence to Jhung, held by Ahmed Khan, a chief of considerable note. The Khan made

* Despatches, vol. iii. p. 267. † *Ibid.* p. 369.

his submission, and bought off the invaders. Sahiwal and Kot Maharaja, possessions of two Balooch Musulmans, were next visited, and an acknowledgment of supremacy, with presents of horses and other gifts, saved them from ravage. As the season advanced, preparation was made to visit the neighbourhood of Multan, but the governor, Mozuffur Khan, anticipated the design, and averted the evil from his subjects and dependants by the transmission of timely and rich presents. Relations were then established with all the Musulman chiefs and families settled about the Chenab and Jelum; and, although the amount obtained in this first visit, in the way of tribute, or by gifts, was not large, the effect of the operations of the season was beneficial to the ulterior views of the aspiring Sikh, for the chiefs, as far as the Indus, began to see to what quarter their hopes and fears must thenceforward be directed: most of them at once made their election for submission to the ruler of Lahore, and withdrew from this period from further connection with the Cabul court or its officers.

In February 1805, Runjeet Singh returned

to his capital, which was now established at Lahore, and celebrating there the *Hooli* Saturnalia, he went afterwards with a slight attendance to the annual fair, held at the time of performing ablutions in the Ganges at Hurdwar. The ceremonies of his religion being there completed, he returned towards the beginning of June, and employed the rains in farming out the revenues of the districts retained in his personal administration to the highest bidders. This has ever been his only scheme of revenue management. The farmer has full powers even of life and death over those committed to his tender mercies, and his lease is a mere license to rob.

After the *Dusera* of 1805, the Sikh army was again led by Runjeet Singh into the Mahomedan territory between the Chenab and Indus, and the chief of Jhung was called upon to settle for an annual tribute, the demand upon him being now raised to 120,000 rupees. Before, however, this negotiation could be brought to a conclusion, Runjeet was recalled by intelligence of the near approach of Jeswunt Rao Holkar and Ameer

Khan from the east, pursued by the British army under Lord Lake. Futeh Singh Aloowala was accordingly left to make arrangements with the chiefs of the west, and Runjeet, hastening back to Amritsur, met there the fugitive Mahratta, with whom he had no easy part to play. Jeswunt Rao threatened to continue his flight westward towards the Cabul dominions. Lord Lake, however, had arrived on the Beas, and was prepared to follow, and it was neither convenient nor wise to permit operations of the kind that must ensue to be carried on in the Punjab. On the other hand, Runjeet, though he would have proved an useful auxiliary to either party, was sensible of his inability to offer open resistance. In this state of things, the relations he maintained with Jeswunt Rao Holkar were friendly, but not encouraging, and that chief, being disappointed in the hope of rousing the Sikh nation to a co-operation in hostility with him against the British, yielded to the difficulties by which he was surrounded, and made his terms with Lord Lake, in a treaty concluded on the 24th

December, 1805. Friendly engagements were further exchanged by the British commander with Runjeet Singh and the Aloowala sirdar; and in January 1806 the two armies, which had inspired so much alarm in the Punjab, returned to Hindustan, leaving the Sikh chiefs to celebrate the *Hooli* unembarrassed by their presence. Runjeet Singh's excesses at this festival produced a disease which confined him for four months.

It was upon this occasion, as before mentioned, that the last Gurumata, or national council, was held, with a view to decide on the means to avert the danger threatened to the country by the presence of the English and Mahratta armies. It was attended, according to Malcolm, by few chiefs, and most of the absentees, who had any power, were bold and forward in their offers to resist any resolution to which this council might come. "The intrigues and negotiations of all appeared indeed, at this moment, to be entirely directed to objects of personal resentment, or personal aggrandizement; and every shadow of that concord, which once

formed the strength of the Sikh nation, seemed to be extinguished."

Towards the end of the rains, Runjeet reappeared in a new field, and entered on measures which, in their sequel, had a material influence on his future destiny and fortunes.

The Rajas of Puteala and Naba were at feud, on account of some lands situated between the village of Doluddee and the town and fort of Naba. The Jheend chief, Raja Bhag Singh, was the ally of Naba, and so were the Ladwa and Kytul chiefs, but their united forces were unequal to a contest with their powerful neighbour of Puteala. In this extremity, Bhag Singh, of Jheend, the maternal uncle of Runjeet, was deputed to invite his assistance to the weaker party; and the *Dusera* was no sooner over, than the ruler of Lahore hastened across the Sutluj to take part in this quarrel. He passed the river at Lodiana, and, mastering the place, presented it to Raja Bhag Singh, in exclusion of Rani Noorun-Nissa, mother of Rao Ilias, to whom it had belonged. Sanewal was next seized from another defenceless

widow,* this class of occupants being regarded by Runjeet as his legitimate prey. The place was given in jagir to Mohkum Chund Dewan, but restored afterwards on realization of a *nuzurana* of 30,000 rupees. Driving the Puteala troops out of Doluddee, the invader approached Munsurpur, where Maha Raja Saheb Singh, successor to Umur Singh, was in position, with his main body. The Maha Raja, by a sum of money and the present of a piece of artillery, propitiated the Lahore chief, and Juswunt Singh, of Naba, contributed also to satisfy his cupidity, whereupon he was induced to remove the scourge of his ill-organized army of plunderers back into the Punjab. Doluddee was restored to Puteala, at the intercession of Raja Bhag Singh, and Runjeet Singh, taking the opportunity to pass the Dewali and perform his ablutions in the holy tank of Thanesur, re-crossed the Sutluj after that festival, and bent his course by the way of

* Maee Luchmee, widow of Sodha Singh—she invited the aid of Runjeet Singh, being at issue with her son, who held her at the time in confinement.

Rahoon, the residence of Tara Singh Ghyba,* to the holy fires of Juwala Mookhee. Here he met Raja Sunsar Chund, of Kangra, who solicited his aid against Umur Singh, the Goorka commander, before whom all the chiefs of the hills, from the Gogra to the Sutluj, had fallen in succession, and whose detachments were then ravaging Kangra. The price demanded by Runjeet for his services being deemed excessive, the interview led to no present arrangement between the chiefs; but, as the difficulties of the Hill Raja increased, the negotiation was afterwards renewed.†

* Captain Wade states that Tara Singh died during this expedition, and that on this occasion Runjeet Singh made an acquisition of eight lakhs of rupees in cash, and of the jewels of the deceased chief, which were of great value. The treasure is alleged to be the first of any extent that was so obtained. Captain Murray, however, places the death of Tara Singh in 1807-8, during the second expedition of Runjeet Singh across the Sutluj, and Captain Wade appears to have confounded the two visits.

† The result of Runjeet Singh's expedition of this season, from the time of his leaving Amritsur until his return, is stated by Khooshwuqt Rae to have been seven elephants, nine pieces of ordnance, fifty horses, and about two lakhs of rupees in cash. In

The year 1807 was marked by the lapse and resumption of Pursroor and Chumara, possessions of Nur Singh, deceased, an old Sikh sirdar. A jagir for mere subsistence was assigned to the son. Runjeet next prepared a formidable expedition against Kasoor, which had long been a thorn in the side of his power, and from the conquest of which, as being a Musulman possession, he hoped for an access of credit and popularity amongst his own sect and nation. In February, 1807, he invaded the territory with

1807, Jodh Singh was gained over to close alliance with Runjeet, and Khooshwuqt Rae gives a long detail of the means used to cajole him. Amongst other things, Runjeet Singh asked permission to inspect the fort of Ramgurh, and went there thinly attended. He professed great admiration of the fortifications, and ordered the foundations of a fort for himself, afterwards called Govindgurh, to be laid down according to the same plan. Jodh Singh was the son of Jasa Singh, Maha Singh's ally against Jy Singh. He joined with his misul the army that was led by Runjeet Singh against Kasoor in 1807, which is stated at 30,000 horse, being the united force of the Sukurchukeas, Ghuneeas, Aloowalas, and Rumgurheas. After eight days' fighting, an out-work of the place was carried, when, Shurf-ud-deen and others deserting, Kutub-ud-deen surrendered.

a large force, and Kutub-ud-deen was compelled to shut himself up in his fortress at Kasoor. Internal seditions and broils completed the ruin of this Patan family, and in March the chief surrendered at discretion. He was left in possession of a small territory south of the Sutluj, and bound to furnish a contingent of troops on demand. Kasoor itself and all the territory held by the family in the Punjab were resumed, and assigned for the present in jagir to Nyal Singh Utharawala. From Kasoor, Runjeet proceeded towards Multan, and occupied and kept garrisons in various dependencies of that government. In April, the town of Multan was mastered, but the governor held out the fort, into which the principal inhabitants had retired with their valuables. Being unprovided with the means of siege, Runjeet accepted a sum of money from Mozuffur Khan, and returned to Lahore in May.

Mozuffur Khan is said to have paid eighty thousand rupees, and to have given five horses, to be rid of the Sikh army. During the march back, a zemindar came up

mounted on a fine horse to pay his respects. Runjeet Singh coveted the horse, and his over-zealous courtiers demanded it rudely. The rider, being offended, rode up to Runjeet's elephant and made several cuts at him. The guard and attendants gathered round, but none was found that could match the zemindar in horsemanship and sword-play. After having wounded and unhorsed several, he was shot and his horse thus secured.

In the interval, before the rains, he detached a force against Adeenanugur, under the Kangra hills, and levied exactions in that neighbourhood from several Sikh and mountain chiefs, who had hitherto enjoyed immunity from their dependence on the Ghunee Misul, with the head of which, Suda Koonwur, Runjeet stood in such close relation. The measure gave offence to that lady, and the foundation was thus laid for the differences and intrigues which led eventually to her ruin.

The wife of the Puteala Raja was an ambitious intriguing woman who had long sought to set aside her husband, or at least to procure the assignment of a separate

territory for her minor son Kurum Singh. When Jeswunt Rao Holkar passed through Puteala, on his way to the Punjab, she had endeavoured to make him instrumental to her views, and that wily chief made the state of things which prevailed conducive to his own enrichment, but being pressed for time, in consequence of the approach of Lord Lake, he left matters between the raja and rani as they were. The quarrel being now renewed, the rani sent, in the rains of 1807, to invite Runjeet Singh to espouse her cause, promising him a famous brass piece of ordnance belonging to the family, and which bore the name of Kuree Khan, and also a diamond necklace of known value, as the price of his assistance. The Lahore chief gladly seized the occasion to interfere, and crossed the Sutluj at Huree-ke-Puttun. In the month of September, on his route towards Puteala, he seized all the remaining possessions of the deceased Ilias-Rae, and distributed them amongst his dependants and allies. Before Runjeet reached Puteala, the raja and rani had come to a reconciliation, the latter having,

through the mediation of the Jheend and Thanesur chiefs, obtained for her son a separate jagir of 50,000 rupees per annum. The raja now made some demur to render up the gun and necklace promised by his rani, but Runjeet appealed to the invitation he had received, and his appeal being backed by the condition of his force, the two articles were given up according to promise, though with evident reluctance. Runjeet marched to reduce Nurayungurh, which was surrendered, and made over to the Aloowala chief, after an unsuccessful attempt to take it by storm, which was attended with a loss of near 400 killed and wounded.

While engaged before Nurayungurh, the old chief Tara Singh Ghyba, who was serving with Runjeet Singh, died, and his followers secretly conveyed the corpse across the Sutluj to his fort of Rahun, where the funeral obsequies were performed, and the widow and sons made preparation to maintain their possessions. While the body, however, was yet on the pyre, Runjeet Singh's detachment, which had followed

on the event being ascertained, arrived to demand a surrender of treasures, and to enforce a resumption of the chief's territory. After a slight resistance, the family was compelled to submit, and though the sons at first received a small provision for subsistence, they were soon deprived of even this means of support, and have since lived in indigence. On his route back from Nurayungurh, Runjeet seized Moonda, south of the Sutluj, from the son of Dhurum Singh, and sold it to the Jheend sirdar: and Bhulolpoor and Bhurtgurh were similarly taken from Bhughael Singh's widow.

It was about this time, that is, towards the close of 1807, that Mohkum Chund presented himself at the court of Runjeet Singh, and was appointed Dewan. He had served in this capacity with Saheb Singh of Goojrat, and, until his appointment, Runjeet Singh had no officer of this description.

In December, Runjeet Singh returned to Lahore, and was presented by his wife, Mehtab-Koonwur, with twins. The boys were named Sher Singh and Tara Singh, but Runjeet never fully acknowledged

them as his own offspring. Mehtab-Koonwur's fidelity had for some time been suspected by her husband, and she had, in consequence, been living with her mother, Suda Koonwur. The report ran, that the boys were procured by the latter from a carpenter and weaver, and were produced as born to her daughter, the public having, for some time previously, been prepared for the birth, by reports circulated of Mehtab being with child.

The commencement of 1808 was marked by the seizure of Puthan Kot,* under the Kangra hills, belonging to Jymul Ghunea, and by exactions from chiefs in the hills and plains in that direction. Mohkum Chund Dewan was employed simultaneously in settling arrangements with the dependants of the Duleala Misul, at the head of which Tara Singh Ghyba had continued, while he lived. Most of the feudatories were confirmed, on their agreeing to transfer their allegiance, and furnish contingents of horse,

* Khooshwuqt Rae assigns the capture of Puthan Kot and Seal Kot to the previous season, that is, 1807-8.

to be constantly in attendance. Seal-Kot and Sheikhupura, south of the Sutluj, were next seized, and annexed to the immediate territory of the Lahore chief, by Mohkum Chund; and the Dewan, being kept in the field during the rains, seized various other places on both sides of the Sutluj, from the Anundpur Mukawal valley downwards, and confirmed to his master all that had formerly belonged to Tara Singh or to Bhughael Singh.

The extensive permanent occupations and usurpations, thus made by Runjeet Singh, on the east and south banks of the Sutluj, excited the alarm of the Sikh chiefs situated between that river and the Jumna, and, after a conference, they determined to send a mission to Delhi, composed of Raja Bhag Singh, of Jheend, Bhae Lal Singh, of Kytul, and Chyn Singh Dewan, of Puteala, to solicit that their possessions might be taken under the protection of the British Government. The mission reached Delhi, and waited on Mr. Seton, the Resident, in March, 1808. The answer they received, though not decisive, was encouraging to their hope that the

Lahore ruler would not be suffered to extend his usurpations eastward. Intelligence of this mission, however, no sooner reached Lahore, than Runjeet, feeling disquieted, despatched agents to invite the three chiefs who composed it to wait upon him, that he might endeavour to allay their fears. They accordingly went to his camp at Amritsur, where they were received with much favour, and no effort was spared to detach them from the design of forming any connection with the British Government.

Pending these transactions, upon the alarm of an invasion of India being meditated by the French emperor, Lord Minto determined to send missions to ascertain the condition of the intervening countries, and the feeling of their rulers, chiefs, and people. The growing power of Runjeet Singh, whose authority was now completely established in the Punjab, made it essential to include his court, and the collision threatened by the recent proceedings and known designs of Runjeet, east of the Sutluj, formed an additional motive for deputing a British agent to Lahore. Mr. (now Lord) Metcalfe was

the negotiator selected on this occasion, and the announcement of the intended deputation was received by Runjeet Singh, while the Jheend and Kytul chiefs were in attendance on him. To them the contents of the despatch were communicated, and the matter formed the subject of much anxious deliberation. It was determined to receive Mr. Metcalfe at Kasoor, whither Runjeet marched for the purpose, in September, 1808.

On the envoy's arrival, he was received with the usual attentions, but had scarcely found an opportunity to enter on the subjects proposed for discussion with the Sikh chief, when the latter suddenly broke up his camp from Kasoor, and crossed the Sutluj with his army. Fureed-Kot was immediately occupied by him and made over to Suda Koonwur, Goolab Singh being ejected, and Runjeet then proceeded against the Musulman possession of Muler Kotila. The Patan family holding it was reduced to extremity, and agreed to a large money-payment, giving a bond of a lakh of rupees, to which the Puteala Raja was induced, by the

deposit of some strongholds, to be surety. Mr. Metcalfe accompanied Runjeet Singh to Fureed-Kot, but refused to countenance any military operations east of the Sutluj. He accordingly remained near that river until his government should determine what to do in the juncture, and addressed in the interval a strong remonstrance against such aggressions, committed in the very face of his proposition to make the matter the subject of discussion and negotiation between the governments.

In the meantime, Runjeet continued his progress to Umbala, which, with its dependencies, he seized, and made over to the Naba and Kytul chiefs. He then exacted tribute from Shahabad and Thanesur, and returning by Puteala, made a brotherly exchange of turbands with the weak Raja Saheb Singh. After this expedition, he again gave Mr. Metcalfe the meeting at Amritsur. The government at Calcutta had in October determined on its course, and the envoy was now instructed to avow, that the country between the Sutluj and the Jumna was under British protection, and although that

government had no design to require the surrender of possessions occupied before its interposition, it must insist on the restoration of all that had been seized during the late expedition of Runjeet Singh. To enforce this demand, and support the negotiation, a body of troops was advanced to the frontier under Colonel (afterwards Sir David) Ochterlony, and an army of reserve was formed and placed under the command of Major-General St. Leger, to be prepared for any extended operations, which the activity and supposed hostile designs of Runjeet might render necessary.

Colonel Ochterlony crossed the Jumna at Boorea on the 16th January, 1809, and as he approached Umbala, Runjeet Singh's detachment retired to the Sutluj. Taking on his way the several places visited by the Sikh army, the British commander reached Lodiana on the Sutluj, and took up a position there on the 18th February following. His march was hailed by the people as well as chiefs, as affording a promise of future protection and tranquillity, and they vied with

one another in the display of their gratitude.

Up to this period, Runjeet had maintained, in the conferences to which the envoy was admitted, that the Jumna, and not the Sutluj, was the proper boundary of the British possessions, and that, in right of his supremacy over the Sikh nation, no less than as Governor of Lahore, he was warranted in asserting feudal superiority over all the chiefs of that nation between those two rivers. The existing independence of Puteala, and the other principalities, had no weight in argument with a chief, whose title was the right to plunder and usurp, according to the condition of his army. The arrival of Colonel Ochterlony on the Sutluj, however, opened his eyes to a new fear, which was, that if he longer resisted, offers of protection might be made to chiefs in the Punjab, which must involve him in collision, and, perhaps, hostility, with a power he never thought himself capable of seriously opposing in the field. His resolutions were hastened by an event that occurred in his camp. The *Mohurrum,* the

first and sacred month of the Mahomedans, commenced in 1809 towards the end of February, and the followers of this faith, in the suite of the envoy, prepared to celebrate the deaths of Husun and Hoosein, the two sons of Ali, with the usual ceremonies. The Akalis, or fanatic priests of the Sikhs, took umbrage at this performance of Moslem rites in the Sikh camp and at Amritsur, and, collecting in a body, headed by Phoola Singh, a bigot of notorious turbulence, they opened a fire of matchlocks, and attacked the envoy's camp.* The escort was called out, and, though composed of two companies of native infantry and sixteen troopers only, this small body charged and routed their party; after which, the biers were buried with the usual forms. Runjeet himself came up at the close of the fight, and immediately it was

* Khooshwuqt Rae says the Akalis intended to have taken their revenge upon the mission by a night attack, to prevent which Runjeet Singh sent 500 of his best troops to mount guard about the camp of Mr. Metcalfe, who, in the morning, moved to a greater distance from Amritsur, and the Akalis dug up and burned the buried biers and every relic they could find of the Mahomedan rite.

over, advanced in person to make apologies to the envoy, expressing his admiration of the discipline and order displayed by the British detachment, and promising his best exertions to prevent any repetition of such disorders. The circumstance made an impression on his mind as to the unfitness of his own troops to cope with those under European discipline, and determined him to secure peace and friendship at the sacrifices demanded.

The British Government were sensible, that, having interfered to impose restraints on the ambition of Runjeet Singh, it had little to expect from his friendship, in case of any necessity arising to arm against invasion from the west. Had danger, indeed, from that quarter been more imminent, it would probably have been deemed politic to extend our direct influence farther into the Punjab, to reduce the power of a chief who shewed himself so unfriendly. But by the time arrangements had to be concluded, the apprehension of any danger had worn off, and the only remaining object was, to secure our own frontier, and, for the credit of our power,

to take redress for the offensive aggressions which the Lahore ruler had recently committed east of the Sutluj. Runjeet expressed a strong desire at this time to obtain a written pledge of our pacific and friendly intentions towards himself; and the restoration of the places seized during his late inroad having been obtained from him, a short treaty, declaratory of mutual peace and friendship, was concluded by the envoy, at Amritsur, on the 25th April, 1809. Its stipulations were to the following effect:—

First.—" Perpetual friendship shall subsist between the British Government and the State of Lahore; the latter shall be considered, with respect to the former, to be on the footing of the most favoured powers, and the British Government will have no concern with the territories and subjects of the Raja to the northward of the river Sutluj.

Second.—" The Raja will never maintain, in the territory which he occupies on the left bank of the Sutluj, more troops than are necessary for the internal duties of the territory, nor commit or suffer any encroachment

on the possessions or rights of the chiefs in its vicinity.

Third.—"In the event of a violation of any of the preceding articles, or of a departure from the rules of friendship, on the part of either state, this treaty shall be considered to be null and void."

The treaty being concluded, Mr. Metcalfe came away on the 1st May following. All further discussions with Runjeet Singh were then dropped, and it became a principle, in all relations with this chief, to confine communications, as much as possible, to friendly letters and the exchange of presents; but the British officers on the frontier were instructed to watch the proceedings of Runjeet, and to require instant redress, in case of any infringement of the terms of the treaty, by interference with, or encroachment on, the rights and territories of chiefs and sirdars east or south of the river Sutluj. By this treaty Runjeet was guaranteed in the possession of territory on the left of the Sutluj, yielding more than twelve lakhs of rupees, and capable of yielding twelve times that amount.

CHAPTER XI.

A.D. 1809 TO 1811.

THE declarations, with which the British force under Colonel Ochterlony advanced to the Sutluj, were in strict conformity with the application made by the chiefs occupying the country between the Indus and Sutluj, through the mission deputed by them to Delhi, in March, 1808. Protection was promised, and no demand of tribute or of contribution of any kind made, to defray the charges incurred by the obligation to afford it. Their recent experience of the rapacity of a Sikh army, and the conviction that there could be no security to themselves, and still less to their families, under a ruler like the chief who had now the ascendant in the Sikh nation, made all the sirdars rejoice that their prayer had been acceded to by the British Government; and the advance of its forces to the Sutluj was looked upon in conse-

quence with no jealousy, but as a necessary measure.

A treaty having been now concluded with Runjeet Singh, it became necessary to fix, somewhat more specifically than had been hitherto done, the relations that were to subsist henceforward between the protecting power and its protected dependants. It was determined to give the desired explanation of the views of the British Government on this subject, by a general proclamation, rather than by entering into any separate engagement with the numerous chiefs affected by the measure. Accordingly, on the 6th May, 1809, an *Itala-nama*, or general declaration, was circulated amongst the sirdars, intimating to them as follows:—

First.—That the territories of Sirhind and Malwa (the designation assumed by the Sikhs of Puteala, Naba, Jheend, and Kytul) had been taken under British protection, and Runjeet Singh had bound himself by treaty to exercise in future no interference therein.

Second.—That it was not the intention of the British Government to demand any tri-

bute from the chiefs and sirdars benefiting by this arrangement.

Third.—That the chiefs and sirdars would be permitted to exercise, and were for the future secured in, the rights and authorities they possessed in their respective territories prior to, and at the time of, the declaration of protection by the British Government.

Fourth.—That the chiefs and sirdars should be bound to offer every facility and accommodation to British troops and detachments, employed in securing the protection guaranteed, or for purposes otherwise connected with the general interests of the state, whenever the same might be marched into, or stationed in, their respective territories.

Fifth.—In case of invasion or war, the sirdars were to join the British standard with their followers, whenever called upon.

Sixth.—Merchants conveying articles, the produce of Europe, for the use of the detachments at Lodiana, or of any other British force or detachment, should not be subject to transit duty, but must be protected in their passage through the Sikh country.

Seventh.—In like manner, horses for the cavalry, when furnished with passports from competent officers, must be exempt from all tax.

The above declaration, being published and circulated, became the charter of rights, to which the chiefs have since appealed for the settlement of all questions that have arisen between them and the British Government. The matters specifically provided for were those only that were urgent. There has been much intricate dispute between rival candidates for sirdarees :—between chiefs who had divided their territory before the declaration of protection was published, and had bound themselves to their co-proprietors by mutual obligations; between chiefs and their dependants of the Sikh nation, as well as zemindars, as to the extent of right and authority possessed at the time of the declaration of protection;—and, perhaps more than all, boundary disputes and quarrels regarding participated rights. These differences, whenever they have arisen, have required adjustment and arbitration by the British officers on the

spot, and have formed the subject of continual references to the supreme government at Calcutta. The regulation of successions was also a matter that from the first required to be undertaken by the protecting authority, and failing heirs of any kind, according to Sikh custom and law, the escheat is considered to fall to the protecting state.

Until the year 1812, the duties of protection, and the settlement of these mutual disputes, though giving constant employment to Colonel Ochterlony, the British officer appointed superintendent of Sikh affairs, produced nothing of sufficient moment to require relation. In that year, however, the disorders in Puteala, consequent upon the raja's imbecility, produced a crisis that called for authoritative interference. The protected territory was invaded by a public depredator, for whose punishment and expulsion the Puteala raja was called upon to furnish a quota of horse. This chief holds territory yielding a revenue of more than thirty lakhs of rupees, yet the whole force he could furnish on the occasion

consisted only of two hundred horse, of the very worst description, and these arrived so late in the field as to be of no use. Colonel Ochterlony, taking with him the chiefs of Jheend and Naba, proceeded to Puteala, to remonstrate with Maharaja Saheb Singh upon the evidence of inefficiency afforded by this state of things, and endeavoured to persuade him to discard the low favourites, who ate up his revenues, and prevented those better disposed from carrying on a consistent system of government, and introducing the desired improvements into the administration. The attempt to procure a change of ministers by persuasion failed, but the raja made many professions of a determination to effect the desired reforms. Being left again to himself, his conduct became so violent and irregular, as to betray symptoms of an aberration of reason, and the colonel was compelled to proceed again to his capital, in order to allow his outraged subjects and dependants to put things on a better footing, and to prevent the raja's removal from power from disturbing the general tranquillity. Saheb Singh was now

deposed, and placed under limited restraint. Askoor Rani, his wife, in association with a shrewd Bramin minister, named Nundee Rao, was appointed regent for the heir-apparent, Kurum Singh, who was then a minor, and affairs were conducted in his name. Maharaja Saheb Singh died a few months after. The rani's doubtful reputation for chastity, and known character for turbulence and intrigue, made her administration unpopular, while the profusion of Saheb Singh had secured him many partisans. Hence the part taken by the British superintendent in the establishment of this scheme of administration, although his motives were appreciated by the discerning, made a great sensation amongst the Sikhs, by the lower order of whom, and particularly by the turbulent and designing, the raja's removal from power was regarded as an act of tyranny and injustice, produced by intrigue, and influenced by worse motives. When Colonel Ochterlony was at Puteala, in prosecution of these measures, he was attacked in his palanquin by an Akali fanatic, who with his drawn sword had nearly taken

the colonel's life. He escaped, however, with slight wounds, by seizing hold of the sword, and the assassin was sentenced to be confined for life at Delhi.

In this notice of occurrences east of the Sutluj, the events of the Punjab have been anticipated. It is now time to resume the narrative of Runjeet Singh's usurpations, and of the enterprises by which he consolidated and extended his dominions.

The first operation in which the Lahore army was engaged after Mr. Metcalfe's departure, in May, 1809, was against Kangra, in the hills; but before moving in that direction, Runjeet Singh gave order to place the fort of Philor, on the Sutluj, opposite to Lodiana, and also Govind-gurh,* in Amritsur, where his treasure was deposited, in the best possible condition for defence. The walls

* Baron Hügel describes this fort as strong. Runjeet began the works in 1807. It was to have been built on the plan of Ramgurh, with the view of flattering Jodh Singh, the grandson of Jae Singh, whose co-operation in the conquest of Kasoor was required by Runjeet. The protection of the holy tank and of the pilgrims afforded a good pretext for erecting a strong place for himself. Continual improvements have now made

were rebuilt, and a deep ditch, scarped with masonry, was added to the works of both strongholds, which being completed, the chief moved into the hills.

Kangra was at this time besieged by Umur Singh T'hapa, the Goorkha commander, but held out against him. The garrison, however, being reduced to extremity, Raja Sunsar Chund tendered the place to Runjeet, on condition of his lending troops to raise the siege, and expel the Goorkhas from the territory west and north of the Sutluj. The engagement was gladly entered into by Runjeet, and on the 28th May, he arrived with his army at Puthan-Kot, in the Jalendra Turaee, a possession of Jymul Ghuneea, which he seized and confiscated. Thence he sent a detachment to strengthen the forces of the confederate hill chiefs, who were at the time engaged in the attempt to cut off Umur Singh's supplies, and so compel his retirement. Umur Singh made an effort to

made it a very formidable place; rising to a lofty height above the plain, it presents, with its tiers of guns, one over the other, a remarkably imposing aspect. Runjeet, to the last, kept his treasure here.

ward off this interference, and tendered to Runjeet a money equivalent for Kangra. The fort, however, had a value in the eye of the aspiring Sikh, which made him regardless of the temptation offered to his avarice. This stronghold has the reputation in Hindustan of being impregnable. Sunsar Chund, notwithstanding his engagement, could not reconcile it to his honour to part with the fort, and evaded Runjeet Singh's importunity for a Sikh garrison to be admitted within its walls.* In August, having proceeded in person to the vicinity, and being still put off with excuses, the Sikh's patience became exhausted. He accordingly placed the Raja's

* Sunsar Chund played a double part through the whole of this negotiation. After his engagement with Runjeet Singh, he entered into a treaty with Umur Singh, promising to surrender the fort to him, and thus, obtaining leave to bring away his family, contrived to throw into the place his brother with four months' supplies, thus hoping to keep it against both claimants. Runjeet Singh, however, seized Unrodh Chund as a hostage, and obtaining from Sunsar Chund an order to be received into the place, bribed Umur Singh, whose army was sickly and pressed for supplies, in order to secure access to the gate, when no opposition was offered to his entrance.

son, who was in attendance with him, under restraint, and having ascertained that the army of Umur Singh was in great straits for supplies, and short of ammunition, he directed a chosen body of Sikhs to advance boldly to the gate, and demand entrance. They suffered considerably in killed and wounded as they ascended, but on reaching the gate, were received into the fort, which thus fell into the power of Runjeet, on the 24th of August, 1809. Umur Singh, being foiled in his purpose, and having no desire to involve himself with the Sikhs, came to an understanding with Runjeet, and having secured, by his connivance, the means of transport, retired across the Sutluj.

On the 31st of September, Runjeet Singh, having completed arrangements with the hill chiefs, and taken the necessary steps to secure his possession of Kangra, returned to the Jalendra Doab, and seized the jagir of Bhughael Singh's eldest widow, who had recently died there. His dewan was similarly employed in seizing the districts of Bhoop Singh Fyzullapurea, whose person he secured treacherously at an interview.

It was at this time, and influenced apparently by observation of the efficiency and discipline maintained by the British sepoys with Mr. Metcalfe, that Runjeet Singh commenced the formation of regular battalions on the British model, entertaining for the purpose *Poorbees*, that is, natives of the Gangetic provinces, and Sikhs from the other side of the Sutluj. These he formed into bodies of 300 and 400, and procured deserters from the British ranks, whom he employed to drill them, and nominated to be commanders, with high pay. His artillery was also formed into a separate corps, under a darogha, or superintendent; and the cavalry, attached to himself, he divided into two classes, one called the Ghor-chur Suwars, and the other the Ghor-chur Khas, the first being paid in money, and the latter by jagirs: both classes, however, were mounted on horses the property of the state.

Jodh Singh, of Vuzeerabad, died towards the close of 1809; and on the first day of the new year, Runjeet arrived there, to enforce the resumption of his territorial possessions. A large sum of money was tendered by

Gundha Singh, the son of the deceased, as the price of his confirmation, and the Lahore chief's avarice being tempted, he refrained from present occupation of the estates, and conferred the shal and turband of investiture on the heir. A dispute between the father and son of Goojrat affording the opportunity,* he succeeded in expelling both, and in confiscating that territory; after which, he proceeded to the country east of the Jelum, as far as Sahewal, and exacted tribute and contributions from the Balooch and other Musulman chiefs of that quarter.

On the 2nd of February, 1810, in the midst of these operations, it was announced

* Khooshwuqt Rae says that, upon Goolab Singh's flying to Runjeet's camp, Saheb Singh of Goojrat, the father, took fright and fled to Bimbur, whereupon his whole territory, and the treasure and property in his forts, were quickly taken possession of by Runjeet, and a jagir of 12,000 rs. per annum was assigned to Goolab Singh. The plunder of this family is stated to have yielded between five and six lakhs of rupees in cash and seven hundred villages. In 1810, Saheb Singh gave himself up and obtained a jagir of 25,000 rupees per annum.

to Runjeet Singh, that Shah Shuja was approaching to seek refuge in his territory, having been compelled to yield to the ascendency acquired by his brother, Shah Mahmud, through the vigour and talents of the Vuzeer, Futeh Khan. The ex-Shah joined the camp of Runjeet at Khooshab on the day following, and was received with outward respect, Runjeet having gone forth in person to conduct him in, and sending a *zeeafut* of 1,250 rs. to his tents upon his alighting. The Shah, however, returned to Rawul Pindi on the 12th of February, to join his brother Zeman Shah, leaving Runjeet to prosecute his operations against the Musulman chiefs east of the Indus. A succour of men and money had been tendered by the government of Cashmere, and by Ata Mahomed Khan, son of the old Vuzeer Sher Mahomed; and, thus aided, Shah Shuja made an attack on Peshawur, and was received there on the 20th of March. In September following, however, he was expelled by Mahomed Uzeem, brother of Futeh Khan, and driven again across the

Indus, whereupon he endeavoured to obtain admission into Multan, without effect.* In the mean time, however, events of interest had occurred in the Punjab.

The Sahewal chief had accepted terms from Runjeet on the 25th of January, but failing to pay the entire amount agreed upon (80,000 rupees), that town was invested on the 7th February. Futeh Khan, the sirdar, surrendered; but upon some demur in giving up a dependency of Sahewal, named Lukhomut, he was sent in irons to Lahore, and

* According to Khooshwuqt Rae, Shah Shuja was invited to Multan by Muzuffur Khan, with whom Vufa Begum, with the Shah's family, had already taken refuge, and had brought the Shah's jewels. Muzuffur Khan declared, he required the Shah's aid and countenance to enable him to withstand the attacks of Runjeet Singh. He no sooner, however, made his appearance under the walls, than the fort guns were opened on him, from which Khooshwuqt Rae surmises that the kiladar wished the death of the Shah, in order that he might plunder the jewels, or if he surrendered, that it was his intention to have given him up to Prince Kamran, which would equally have answered his purpose. Shah Shuja rode away beyond the reach of the fort guns, but remained in the neighbourhood until Muzuffur Khan, repenting, assigned over four purgunas, with a jagir of 10,000 rupees, for the Shah's personal expenses.

kept there in close confinement with all his family, the whole of his estate being sequestrated. On the 15th February, Runjeet's army was before Ooch, the proprietors of which place, Syuds of Geelan and Bokhara, waited on the Sikh with horses, and this conduct, added to the estimation in which their tribe is held for sanctity by both Hindus and Mahomedans, propitiated the chief, and they were left in possession, under an engagement to pay tribute. On the 20th February, such was the rapidity with which Runjeet Singh prosecuted his measures, the whole Sikh army was before Multan ravaging the surrounding territory, consequent upon a refusal by Mozuffur Khan to pay the sum of three lakhs of rupees which had been demanded from him. Runjeet now required the fort of Multan, declaring that he desired it for Shah Shuja, to whom Mozuffur Khan was bound, and had engaged to render it. This specious pretext made no change in Mozuffur Khan's resolution to defend the place to the utmost. Runjeet reconnoitred, and marked out ground for different batteries, and lines of approach, assigning them

to different chiefs, with the promise of rich jagirs to those who made the quickest advance and most impression. Arrangements were made to secure the transmission of supplies by water, as well as by land, from Lahore and Amritsur, and every thing betokened a determination in the Sikh chief to master this important possession.

The garrison was not disheartened, but made the best dispositions possible for defence. A large supply of grain had been laid in, and the fort contained an abundance of fresh water. The little impression made on the walls by the Sikh artillery confirmed the courage of the defenders. The great Bhangee gun, which discharged a ball of two and a half maunds kuchha (about 200 lbs.), had been brought down for the siege, but the materials for such an operation, and the necessary science and experience, were so defective in the Sikh army, that Runjeet Singh, having suffered the loss of many valuable men and officers, particularly Atar Singh, a favourite and confidential companion, who was blown up in a mine, was compelled to grant terms to Mozuffur

Khan, and retired on receiving payment of 1,80,000 rupees.

On the 25th of April, he returned to Lahore mortified by his ill success, and throwing the blame on his officers and jagirdars. He now devoted himself to increase the number of his regular battalions, and formed a corps of Sikhs, called Orderly Khas, or select orderlies, to whom he gave superior pay, and the advantage of carrying his *dustuks*, or orders, to chiefs, and districts, on whom they were thus billeted at high rates. A horse artillery was likewise formed, and improvements were set on foot in every branch of the service, which were all closely superintended by Runjeet in person.

Gundha Singh, who, in January preceding, had secured, by the sacrifice of his father's treasures, a temporary confirmation of his estates, did not long enjoy what he had purchased so dearly. In June 1810, a strong detachment was sent to Vuzeerabad, and the entire possessions of the late Jodh Singh were sequestrated, a few villages only being left to afford subsistence to the youthful victim of this insidious policy. The surviving

widow of Bhugael Singh, Rani Ram-Koonwur, was at the same time expelled from Bahadurpur, which she held as a jagir for subsistence. She took refuge at Lodiana, and obtained a few villages, which had belonged to her husband, on the protected side of the Sutluj.

After the *Dusera*, in the month of October following, Runjeet Singh moved in person to Ramnugur, on the Chenab, and summoned to his presence Nidhan Singh, of Athoo. The chief refused attendance, except under guarantee of a sodee, or Sikh priest; whereupon his fort of Duskut was invested on the 17th October. Runjeet Singh's batteries, however, opened against the place without avail, and an attempt made to influence the garrison, by severities and ill usage of their wives and families, who fell into the besieger's power, was equally ineffective. The Sikh priest, Bydee Jumeyut Singh, was then employed to mediate for the submission of this spirited chief, and upon his guarantee and the promise of a jagir, the sirdar waited on Runjeet Singh, who, regardless of the solemnity

of the engagement, put him in irons. In the beginning of November, Bagh Singh Huluwala, with his son Subha Singh, who were in camp with their followers, fell under the displeasure of the Lahore chief, and were placed under restraint, and all their territorial possessions confiscated; after which, Runjeet Singh returned to his capital, and detached Mohkum Chund Dewan to enforce the collection of tribute, and to complete arrangements in the hills, where the Rajas of Bimbhur and Rajaori, and the tribe of Chibh-Bhao, were refractory.

In December, 1810, Saheb Singh, who had been expelled from Goojrat, was invited to return, and invested with a considerable jagir, and Bagh Singh Huluwala was released from confinement, and similarly honoured. In the same month, the release of Nidhan Singh was obtained by the Bydee priests, who felt their honour concerned in his treatment, after one of their body had been inveigled to give a personal guarantee. They accordingly sat *dhurna** on Runjeet,

* The practice of "sitting *dhurna*" is employed by persons of high-caste to extort from the superstitious prejudices

until he consented to release his prisoner: Nidhan Singh would, however, accept no jagir, or stipend, but retired from the Lahore dominions, and took service with the governor of Cashmere.

In January, 1811, Futeh Khan, of Sahewal, was liberated with his family at the intercession of an Udasi priest, and retired to Bahawulpur. A small jagir was likewise conferred on Dhurum Singh, the ejected proprietor of Dhurum-Kot, in the Jalendra, after which, Runjeet proceeded on a tour to Pind-Dadur-Khan, in which vicinity he captured three small forts belonging to Musulman chiefs; but on the the 24th February, intel-

prejudices of another compliance with an act of justice. Lord Teignmouth says that, in North-western India, the Bramin, who resorts to this expedient, proceeds to the door of the person against whom it is directed, or wherever he may most conveniently intercept him, and sits down, with poison, or some weapon, in his hand, threatening to use it should the other molest him; in this situation he fasts, and by the rigour of etiquette, the other is bound to fast too, and they both starve till he who sits *dhurna* obtains satisfaction. Should the latter perish by hunger, the sin would for ever lie on the other's head. The expedient has rarely failed.

ligence reached his camp, that Shah Mahmud had crossed the Indus, with 12,000 Afghans, before whom the inhabitants of the country were flying. Runjeet immediately took up a position at Rawul-Pindi, and deputed his secretary, Hukeem Uzeez-ud-Deen, to inquire of the Shah his views in this incursion. This agent was crossed by emissaries from the Shah, on their way to Rawul-Pindi, for the purpose of explaining, that the punishment of Ata Mahomed, and the governors of Attock and Cashmere, who had aided Shah Shuja's late attempt on Peshawur, was the only object of the present march; whereupon Runjeet, being relieved from his apprehensions, waited upon the Shah, and, after a friendly interview, both returned to their respective capitals. Runjeet found at Lahore a carriage from Calcutta, which had been forwarded as a present from the Governor-General, Lord Minto. This was the first vehicle on springs in which he had ever sat, and the novelty and ease of motion were highly gratifying to him. The chief, however, was too wily to adopt gene-

rally this mode of conveyance, which would have imposed the necessity of first making roads.

In April and May, Runjeet Singh had armies in three directions, one about Kangra, collecting tributes; a second acting against Bimbhur and Rajaori, and the third, under his son Khuruk Singh, accompanied by Dewan Mohkum Chund, resuming the possessions of the Nukee chiefs. Runjeet remained in person at his capital, directing the whole, and this period of his life is marked by the sudden rise to favour of a young Gour Bramin, named Khooshal Singh, upon whom the most extravagant gifts were daily lavished, and who was raised to the important and lucrative office of Deohree Wala, or Lord Chamberlain, with the rank of Raja, and vested besides with extensive jagirs. Runjeet Singh had ever led a most dissolute life; his debaucheries, particularly during the *Hooli* and *Dussera*, were shameless, and the scenes exhibited on such occasions openly before the court, and even in the streets of Lahore, were the conversation of Hindustan, and rival the worst that is reported in history

of the profligacies of ancient Rome. The chief himself would parade the streets in a state of inebriety, on the same elephant with his courtesans, amongst whom one named Mora acquired most celebrity by her shamelessness, and by the favour with which she was treated. Coin was at one time struck in her name, and her influence seemed without bounds. In August of this year, however, she was discarded, and incarcerated in Puthan-Kot, and the favour she enjoyed seemed to be transferred to the Bramin youth and his brothers. If this conduct in the ruler of Lahore should excite surmises, as to the motives of the extraordinary attachment shewn to a graceful youth of the appearance of Khooshal Singh, the reader must yet make allowances for the habits in which the chief was brought up, and the examples by which he was surrounded. The Sikhs are notoriously addicted to the most detestable vices, and the worst that is said of Roman and Grecian indulgence would find a parallel at the durbars of the chiefs of this nation on either side of the Sutluj. But the reputation of Runjeet Singh, though justly, it is

feared, tainted with the foul blemish, did not suffer in the eyes of his nation from this cause.

Of the twelve original misuls, or confederacies of the Sikhs, there were now remaining in the Punjab, only that of Runjeet himself, the Sukurchukea, with the Ghunea, Ramgurhea, and Aloowala, all closely associated with him, and ranged, it may be said, under his standard. The Phoolkea and Nihung misuls, which, being settled east of the Sutluj, enjoyed the advantage of British protection, and the Fyzullapurea, which had possessions on both sides that river, and the head of which, Boodh Singh sirdar, had uniformly declined to give his personal attendance at Lahore, complete the list which Runjeet Singh was aiming further to reduce. The conduct of Boodh Singh at last brought down upon him the vengeance of the Lahore ruler. On the 19th September, 1811, Dewan Mohkum Chund, attended by Jodh Singh Ramgurhea and other sirdars, entered the Jalendra Doab, with the declared design of seizing the Fyzullapurea possessions in the Punjab. Boodh Singh waited not for the

attack, but fled immediately to Lodiana for personal security. His troops, influenced by the point of honour, made a resistance of some days, before surrendering the principal forts of Jalendra and Puttee, but gave both up on the 6th and 7th of October, before any impression had been made on the walls or defences, and after a needless sacrifice of lives. Boodh Singh has since been content with the lot of a protected Sikh chief, living on the means afforded by his possessions east and south of the Sutluj. In December, Nidhan Singh, son of the old Ghunea Chief Jy Singh, was deprived of the separate jagir assigned to him, in order to secure the sirdaree to his elder brother's widow, Suda Koonwur. His person was seized and placed under restraint at Lahore, while a detachment marched to capture his two forts of Hajipur and Phoolwara, no tie of affinity being recognized as a motive for deviating from the systematic prosecution of the course of policy, by which it appears Runjeet Singh regulated his conduct, viz. the determination to level into subjects and dependants every one who was in a position to assert independ-

ence, or who prided himself on a separate origin, and enjoyed patrimonies won by his own or his ancestors' swords. Runjeet, who was himself free-spoken, and allowed great latitude in conversation to his courtiers, received at this period a rebuke for the grasping disposition he displayed in his treatment of the old Sikh sirdars, from Jodh Singh Ramghurea, himself a reduced chief of the class. When taking his leave to join Mohkum Chund, in the operations against the Fyzullapurea sirdar, Runjeet ordered him presents, as a mark of favour. He begged, however, with characteristic frankness, that such honours might be dispensed with in his case, for he should deem himself fortunate in these times if allowed to keep his own turband on his head. Runjeet took no offence at this freedom, but smiled, and told him to be faithful and of good cheer.

The year 1811 closed with a visit to Lahore by Shah Zeman, the blind brother in exile of Shah Shuja. He came with his family and dependants in November, but experiencing only neglect from the Sikh chief, returned soon after to Rawul-Pindi, where

he had been residing for some months. Shah Shuja, since his failure in September to obtain reception at Multan, embarked in a desperate attempt to push his fortune again beyond the Indus. He was, however, defeated with the loss of his principal officer, Ukrum Khan, and compelled to seek personal safety in secret flight. The brothers had, in the early part of the year, deputed a son of Zeman Shah to Lodiana, to learn if there was any hope of assistance in men or money from the British Government. The prince, however, though received with much attention and civility, was distinctly informed, that no such expectations must be entertained by either member of the royal family of Cabul.

END OF VOL. I.

Printed by J. & H. Cox, Brothers, 74 & 75, Great Queen-street.